

OUR MASTER, THE ARRANGER OF THE RATIB,
IMAM ‘ABDULLAH BIN ‘ALAWI AL-HADDAD, SAID IN HIS BOOK
ENTITLED “THE BOOK OF ASSISTANCE”;

*“Every believer should protect his beliefs by learning the
creed of one of the leading scholars, about whose dignity
and firm establishment in scholarship no differences exist.”*



ISBN: 978 - 981 - 05 - 3399 - 3
Maqam Imam Al-Haddad

رسالة المعاونة

Risālatul Mu’āwanah

THE BOOK of ASSISTANCE

Imam al-Haddad

al-Hadhrāmī, al-Shafīī, al-Hussainī
May Allah, the Exalted Have Mercy Upon Him



لما قام الإمام الحراد
تري قلمي لا ينقصي ولا العوى
الحاوي
ت : ١٥٩٤٤
نشر في دار الكتب العلمية

AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION

رسالة المُعَاوَنَة

The Book of Assistance

Imam al-Haddad

al-Hadhrami, al-Shafii, al-Hussaini
May Allah, the Exalted Have Mercy Upon Him

لِلْإِمَامِ الْحَدَّادِ
الْحَضْرَمِيِّ الشَّافِعِيِّ الْحُسَيْنِيِّ
رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى

Door



An English Translation

رسالة
المُعَاوَنَة وَالْمُظَاهِرَة وَالْمُؤَاوَزَة
لِلرَّاعِبِينَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي سُلُوكِ طَرِيقِ الْآخِرَة

لِلإِمَامِ شَيْخِ الْإِسْلَامِ قُطْبِ الدَّعْوَةِ وَالْإِرْشَادِ
الْحَبِيبِ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَلَوِي الْحَدَّادِ
الْحَضَرَمِيِّ الشَّافِعِيِّ الْحُسَيْنِيِّ
رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى

Front Cover showing the restored front door entrance to
Imam al-Haddad House in Hawi Tarim Hadhramaut Yemen

The Book of Assistance,
Support and Encouragement for
Such Believers as Desire To Follow
The Way of the Afterlife

By the Imam, al-Sheikh of Islam,
the Pivot of *Dakwah*, the Guiding Light
the Beloved Abdullah bin Alwi al-Haddad
al-Hadhrami, al-Shafii, al-Hussaini
May Allah, the Exalted have mercy upon him

An English Translation

Imam Al-Haddad's manuscripts
were recompiled into books by
Habib Ali bin Isa bin Abdulkader
Al-Haddad. They were
subsequently re-edited, reprinted,
translated and distributed by
various inspired parties.

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may
be reproduced, stored in a retrieval
system, or transmitted, in any form
or by any means, without the prior
permission in writing of the Charity
Inquiries concerning reproduction
outside those terms and in other
countries should be sent to
abdulkader_alhadad@yahoo.com

ISBN: 978 – 981 – 05 – 3399 – 3

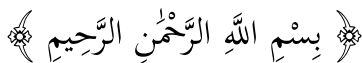
Maqam Imam Alhadad
Charity of Habib Esa bin Abdulkader bin Ahmad Alhadad

Contents

1. Biography of Imam al-Haddad	9
2. Introduction	14
3. Chapter One	Certainty [<i>Yaqin</i>] 23
4. Chapter Two	Intention [<i>Niat</i>] 26
5. Chapter Three	Vigilance 30
6. Chapter Four	The Inner and Outer Self 33
7. Chapter Five	Regular Devotions 35
8. Chapter Six	Reciting the Quran 45
9. Chapter Seven	Acquiring Knowledge 48
10. Chapter Eight	Remembrance 50
11. Chapter Nine	Reflection 55
12. Chapter Ten	Follow the Book and Sunnah 66
13. Chapter Eleven	Doctrine or Creed [<i>Aqidah</i>] 71
14. Chapter Twelve	Religious Obligations 74
15. Chapter Thirteen	Cleanliness 79
16. Chapter Fourteen	Following the <i>Sunnah</i> 83
17. Chapter Fifteen	Conduct in Mosques 94
18. Chapter Sixteen	The Ritual Prayer 98
19. Chapter Seventeen	Prayer in Congregation 101
20. Chapter Eighteen	Zakat 106
20. Chapter Nineteen	Ramadan & Fasting 109
21. Chapter Twenty	Pilgrimage 113

22. Chapter Twenty-One	Piously Devout & Piety [<i>Wara</i>]	116
23. Chapter Twenty-Two	Enjoining Good & Forbidding Evil	122
24. Chapter Twenty-Three	Social Duties	127
25. Chapter Twenty-Four	To Love & Hate for Allah's Sake	133
26. Chapter Twenty-Five	Advice to Muslims	144
27. Chapter Twenty-Six	Salutations & Manners	149
28. Chapter Twenty-Seven	Repentance, Hope & Fear	154
29. Chapter Twenty-Eight	Fortitude	162
30. Chapter Twenty-Nine	Gratitude	168
31. Chapter Thirty	Renunciation [<i>Zuhd</i>]	172
32. Chapter Thirty-One	Reliance on Allah [<i>Tawakkal</i>]	176
33. Chapter Thirty-Two	Divine Love	180
34. Chapter Thirty-Three	Contentment	183
35. Conclusion		188

A Short Biography of Imam Al-Haddad



In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

He is Al-Imam Al-Habib Abdullah bin Alawi Bin Muhammad Al-Haddad, the famous Imam, the Shaykh of Islam, the foremost of the people unification, the noble descendant of the Prophet, Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, a descendant of Al-Imam Hussein, may Allah be pleased with him the Shaykh Abdullah ibn Alawi Al-Haddad Al-Alawi, may Allah reward him for us with the best rewards He gives those of His people who guide us to Him.

He was born in Subair, a small suburb in Tarim, Hadhramaut, South Yemen, on the night 5 Safar 1044 after Hijrah. Tarim was already a centre of the learned *Asyraf* of the descendant of Saiyidina Hussein bin Ali bin Abu Talib. He grew up in an enlightened environment. He was raised and educated there, initially taught by his father, and was never seen to show the recklessness of other children. He lost his eyesight while still young and was granted the power of discernment as compensation. He gathered as he grew, the best of knowledge and spirituality, and became outstanding in knowledge, guidance, calling people to Allah, and being a shaykh in the perfect sense of the word. He was given the title Pole of Guidance [*Qutbul Irshad*] by the greatest of the people of knowledge in his time and after that until today.

Some have said that there were three ranks in calling to Allah, according to whether it was by pen, tongue or foot (travelling). All three combined to perfection in the works of Imam Al-Haddad, may Allah shower His mercy upon him. His books are still in print in Egypt, India, Hijaz, Istanbul, and Java. His fame spread throughout the Muslim world, and his writings, which were base on the Quran and the practices of the Prophet [*Sunnah*] were never criticised nor thought to be controversial.

His roots from the Prophet Muhammad, the messenger of Allah, blessings and peace upon him, from Fatima Az-Zahraa, daughter of Muhammad and Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib, Gate to (The Radiant) the City of Knowledge, may Allah be pleased with him and all his descendants.

Then on from Al-Imam Hussein > Imam Ali Zainal Abidin > Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir > Imam Jaafar As-Saadiq > Imam Ali Al-Uraidhi > Imam Muhammad An-Naqib > Isa Ar-Rumi > Ahmad Al-Muhajir illa Allah > Ubaidillah > Alawi > Muhammad > Alawi > Ali Khali' Qassam > Muhammad of Mirbat > Alawi > Abdur Rahman > Ahmad Al-Faqih > Abdullah > Muhammad > Ahmad > Abu Bakr At-Tawil > Ahmad Al-Haddad > Alawi > Muhammad > Abdullah > Ahmad > Muhammad > Alawi > Abdullah Qutbul Irshad

He earnestly sought knowledge, accompanying such scholars as:

1. al-Habib Umar bin Abdul Rahman Al-Attas
2. al-Habib Oukail bin Abdurrahman As-Saqqaf
3. al-Habib Abdurrahman bin Syaikh Aideed
4. al-Habib Sahl Bin Ahmed Bahasan Al-Hadeely Baalwi
5. as-Saeed Muhammad Bin Alwi As-Saqqaf

Amongst his students are:

1. His son, our leader al-Habib Hassan bin Abdullah Al-Haddad.
2. al-Habib Ahmad bin Zain Al-Habshee
3. al-Habib Abdurrahman bin Abdullah Bilfaqeh
4. al-Habib Muhammad bin Zain bin Semait
5. al-Habib Umar bin Zain bin Semait
6. al-Habib Umar bin Abdurrahman Al-Bar
7. al-Habib Ali bin Abdullah bin Abdurrahman As-Saqqaf
8. al-Habib Muhammad bin Umar bin Taha As-Safi As-Saqqaf and many others.

It seems as he was selected to carry out the mission of *dakwah* for Islam and spiritual guidance using wit and wisdom. People eventually entirely attended to him, and his name has become popular.

People from different fields of life benefited from his books, preaches and guidance. His missions received people's approval and love. His publications have been translated into English, Malay, French and other languages. He passed away on the evening of Tuesday, 7 *Dzulqaedah* 1132 Hijrah and was buried in a simple grave at the graveyard of Zanbal in Tarim. May Allah show mercy on him and reward him abundantly.

His publications are distinctively popular among the old and young then and till now. They include the following:

١. النَّصَائِحُ الدِّينِيَّةُ وَالْوَصَايَا الْإِيمَانِيَّةُ.

An Nasaih id-Diniyya wal Wasaya al-Imaniyyah.

1. Sincere Religious Advice and Recommendations of the Iman.

٢. الدَّعْوَةُ التَّامَّةُ وَالتَّذَكِيرَةُ الْعَامَّةُ.

Ad-Da'watut-Taammah wat-Tadhkiratul 'Aammah.

2. Perfect Summons and General Admonition.

٣. رِسَالَةُ الْمُعَاوَنَةِ وَالْمُظَاهَرَةِ وَالْمُؤَاوَزَةِ لِلرَّاعِيْنَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي سُلُوكِ طَرِيقِ الْآخِرَةِ.

Risalatul Mu'awanah wal Muzhaharah wal Mu'azarah Lir-Raagibeen Minal Mu'mineen Fee Suluki Tariq-al-Akhirah.

3. The Book of Assistance, Support and Encouragement for Such Believers as Desire to Follow the Way of the Afterlife.

٤. الْفُصُولُ الْعِلْمِيَّةُ وَالْأُصُولُ الْحِكْمِيَّةُ.

Al-Fusul ul-'Ilmiyyah wal Usul ul-Hikamiyyah.

4. Knowledge and the Principles of Wisdom.

٥. سَبِيلُ الْإِذْكَارِ وَالْإِعْتِبَارِ بِمَا يَمُرُّ بِالْإِنْسَانِ وَيَنْقَضِي لَهُ مِنَ الْأَعْمَارِ.

Sabilul-Iddhikaar wal-I'tibaar Bima Yamurru bil-Insan Wa Yanqadhee Lahu Minal A'maar.

5. The Way to Remember and Learn from the Lives of Man that Wane and Perish.

٦. رِسَالَةُ الْمُذَاكَرَةِ مَعَ الْإِخْوَانِ الْمُحِبِّينَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْخَيْرِ وَالْدِّينِ.

Risalatul Muzhaakarah Ma'al-Ikhwaanil-Muhibbeen Min Ahlil Khayr Waddeen.

6. A Discussion Among Brothers and the Loved Ones From Among the Righteous in Good Deeds and Faith.

٧. رِسَالَةُ آدَابِ سُلُوكِ الْمُتَرِيدِ. *Rislatu Aadaabi Suluk il-Murid.*

7. The Book of Discipline in the Path of the Seeker.

٨. كِتَابُ الْحِكْمِ. *Kitaabul Hikam.*

8. Book of Wisdom.

٩. النَّفَائِسُ الْعُلَوِّيَّةُ فِي الْمَسَائِلِ الصُّوفِيَّةِ.

An-Nafaais-il Alawiyyah fil Masaail-as-Sufiyyah.

9. The Gems of the *Alawiyya* Concerning Sufism.

١٠. إِثْحَافُ السَّائِلِ بِجَوَابِ الْمَسَائِلِ.

Ithaaf is-Saail bi-Jawabil Masaail.

10. The Gifts for the Seeker Being Some Answered Questions.

١١. الْوَصَايَا النَّافِعَةُ. *Al Wasaya an-nafi'ah.*

11. Beneficial Religious Counsels.

١٢. وَسِيْلَةُ الْعِبَادِ إِلَى زَادِ الْمَعَادِ.

Waseelatul 'Ibaad Ilaa Zaadil Ma'aad.

12. A Means for People to Provide for the Hereafter. (A Compilation of the Imam Azkaar and Awraad, including *Wird Latif*, *Wird Kabir*, *Ratib al-Shahir*, *Hizbul-Fath* and *Hizbun-Nasr* by Habib Muhamad bin Alawi Al- Haddad).

١٣. الدُّرُّ الْمَنْظُومُ لِذَوِي الْعُقُولِ وَالْفُهُومِ.

Ad-Durrul Mandhum Li zawil 'Uqul Wal Fuhum.

13. Poetic Pearls for Discerning and Understanding Minds and this is his *Diwan*, the best of his *Qaseedas*.

١٤. تَثْبِيْثُ الْقُوَادِ - بِذِكْرِ كَالَمِ مَجَالِسِ.

Tathbitul fu'ad bizikir kalam majilis.

14. Affirming of the Hearts - with Remembrance of the Speeches at Majlis Volume I and Volume II.

١٥. مُكَاتِبَاتُ الْإِمَامِ الْحَدَّادِ.

Mukatibat Al-Imam Al-Haddad.

15. Correspondences of Imam Al-Haddad.

Most of Imam Al-Haddad's manuscripts were recompiled by Habib Ali bin Isa bin Abdulkader Al-Haddad, who was born in Singapore and educated in Tarim. They were subsequently re-edited, reprinted, translated and distributed by various inspired parties.

Scholars, as well as the laymen, so highly admired the works that they would read them repeatedly. These scholarly works have also been described as a summary of the quintessence of Scholar Ghazali's literature and eventually indispensable as being brief, but comprehensive.

Introduction

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

O Lord, make it easy and assist, O Generous One! Grant us truth for You are the One Who Grants, the Knowing.

سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ.

“Transcendent is You! We have no knowledge. Except that which You have taught us. You are indeed the All-Knowing, the Wise.”¹

All praise belongs to Allah, the One, the Unique, the Munificent, the Bestower, the Provider, the Solicitous, the Benevolent, Who did send Muhammad, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him. The Seal of His Prophets, with His Message to all men and jinn, and revealed to him the Quran in which is guidance for the people and clear indications for guidance and discernment, and ordained for him and his Nation that which He had enjoined upon Nuh (Noah), Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses) and Isa (Jesus). He gave precedence to his religion over all others, and made him the most honourable of all His creation in His sight, and rendered his nation the best nation brought out for humankind. Which believed in Allah and the Last Day, enjoined good and forbade evil, assisted each other in benevolence and be mindful of their duties and fear Allah [*taqwa*], refrained from helping each other in sin and aggression, established the ritual prayer, gave the zakat, gave each different counsels of truth and endurance, and fought in the way of Allah, fearless of the criticism of those who are devious and forsaken. For only those in whom Allah’s words of

¹ Surah 2 Al Baqara Verse 32.

wretchedness, failure, disgrace and humiliation were fulfilled attempt to drive people away from Allah and denigrate those who give Him His due. And only those whom Allah has destined for happiness, safety, triumph and felicity give themselves totally to counselling Allah's servants and inviting them to His door. These are the Prophet's heirs, the leaders of those who have *taqwa*, the best among believers in the sight of the Lord of the Worlds. They are firmly grounded in knowledge, have experienced the realities of faith, certainty and excellence, and attained, through unveiling and contemplation, to the secrets of Allah's Angels Mulk and Malakut. They only reached to these merits and achieved such ranks through the excellence of their following in the footsteps of the Leader of Leaders whom Allah sent as a Mercy to the Worlds, who is Allah's slave, His Messenger, Beloved, and Intimate Friend, our lord Muhammad, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him and his house, and may these blessings be repeated in each instant and perpetuated for as long as Allah, the Sovereign, the Requirer abides.

To proceed; the poor servant, confessing his shortcomings and limitations, hoping for the pardon of his Able Lord, the sharif Abdullah ibn Alawi al-Haddad Ba-Alawi al-Husayni, may Allah forgive him and his ancestors, said, "This is a treatise which, by Allah's Ability and Power, is comprehensive, containing counsels which, by Allah's Grace and Mercy, will be beneficial. I was moved to write it by the wish to obey the command of Allah, the Exalted and that of His Prophet, and the desire for that which has been truthfully promised to those who give guiding directions, invite to goodness and spread knowledge."

Allah, the Exalted says,

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ،
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ.

"Let there be among you a community who invite to goodness, enjoin right conduct, and forbid evil; those are the successful."¹

¹ Surah 3 ala Imran Verse 104.

The Exalted also says,

ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ.

“Invite (call upon all the people) to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching.”¹

The Exalted also says,

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَتُبَيِّنُنَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْتُمُونَهُ.

“And remember Allah took a covenant from the People of the Book, to make it known and clear to mankind, and not to hide it.”²

The Exalted explained in saying,

قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي.

“Say (O Muhammad), “This is my way: I do invite unto Allah, on evidence clear as the seeing with one’s eyes, I and whoever follows me.”³

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

لِيُبَلِّغَ الشَّاهِدُ مِنْكُمْ الْغَائِبَ فَرُبَّ حَامِلٍ فِقْهِ إِلَى مَنْ هُوَ أَفْقَهُ مِنْهُ، وَرُبَّ حَامِلٍ فِقْهِ لَيْسَ بِفِقْهِهِ.

“Let those who are present inform those who are absent; a carrier of knowledge may carry it to someone who has more knowledge than he, and many men carry knowledge who are not themselves knowledgeable.”⁴

And he may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَنْ دَعَا إِلَى هُدًى كَانَ لَهُ مِنَ الْأَجْرِ مِثْلُ أُجُورِ مَنْ تَبِعَهُ، لَا يَنْقُصُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ أُجُورِهِمْ شَيْئًا، وَمَنْ دَعَا إِلَى ضَلَالَةٍ، كَانَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْإِثْمِ مِثْلُ آثِمٍ مَنْ تَبِعَهُ لَا يَنْقُصُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ آثَامِهِمْ شَيْئًا.

¹ Surah 16 an Nahl Verse 125.

² Surah 3 ala Imran Verse 187.

³ Surah 12 Yusuh Verse 108.

⁴ Narrated in Sahih al Bukhari and Sunan Abu Dawud.

“Anyone who summons to guidance will receive the same reward as those who follow him, without this diminishing their reward in any way; and anyone who summons to the error will have sinned as much as all those who follow him without this diminishing their sins in any way.”

And he may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَنْ دَلَّ عَلَى خَيْرٍ كَانَ لَهُ مِنَ الْأَجْرِ مِثْلُ فَاعِلِهِ.

“The one who points out goodness obtains the same reward as the one who does it.”

And he may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him also said,

إِذَا مَاتَ ابْنُ آدَمَ انْقَطَعَ عَمَلُهُ إِلَّا مِنْ ثَلَاثٍ: صَدَقَةٍ جَارِيَةٍ، أَوْ عِلْمٍ يَنْتَفَعُ، أَوْ وَلَدٍ صَالِحٍ يَدْعُو لَهُ.

“When the son of Adam dies his works come to an end except for three: a continuing charity, knowledge of which use is made, and a righteous son who prays for him.”

And he may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

أَجْوَدُكُمْ بَعْدِي رَجُلٌ عَلِمَ عِلْمًا فَتَشَرَّهُ، يُبْعَثُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أُمَّةً وَحْدَهُ.

“The most generous of you after me will be a man who acquires knowledge and spreads it; he will be resurrected on the Day of Rising as a nation by himself.”

And he may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

الْخَلْقُ كُلُّهُمْ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى مُعَلِّمِي النَّاسِ الْخَيْرِ حَتَّى حَيْثَانُ الْمَاءِ.

“All creatures pray for the one who teaches goodness, even the fish in the water.”

And he may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

الْخَلْقُ كُلُّهُمْ عِيَالُ اللَّهِ، وَأَحَبُّهُمْ إِلَيَّ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى أَنْفَعَهُمْ لِعِيَالِهِ.

“All creatures are the children of Allah, and the dearest to Allah, the Exalted are those who are most beneficial to His children.”

And none can be of more benefit to Allah’s creatures than those

who invite them to His, the Exalted, door by teaching them the necessary knowledge of Monotheism [*Tawhid*] and obedience, remind them of His signs and graces, give them tidings of His Mercy and warnings of His wrath which strikes those who expose themselves to it, whether they be disbelievers or merely transgressors.

I was prompted to obey this formidable command and was reinforced in my wish to attain to the generous promise given in the verses mentioned above and hadiths, as well as others which I have not mentioned, by a truthfully aspiring brother, a Sayyid who treads the path to Felicity, who asked me to write to him with a counsel to which he might firmly adhere. I have answered him through the desire mentioned above to obey His commands, Exalted is He, win His reward, and obtain His assistance, hoping that He, Glory belongs to Him, will attend to my needs, as His Messenger, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said,

مَنْ كَانَ فِي حَاجَةٍ أَخِيهِ كَانَ اللَّهُ فِي حَاجَتِهِ، وَاللَّهُ فِي عَوْنِ الْعَبْدِ مَا كَانَ الْعَبْدُ فِي عَوْنِ أَخِيهِ.

“Whenever a man attends to the fulfilling of his brother's need, Allah shall attend to the fulfilling of his need; and Allah will assist His servant as long as the servant is assisting his brother.”

I seek Allah's forgiveness, and do not claim that my intention in writing this treatise is confined to these functional religious purposes; how may I do so when I am aware of the hidden desires, egotistic passions, and worldly wishes that I harbour?

وَمَا أُبْرِئُ نَفْسِي إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ إِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّي إِنَّ رَبِّي غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ.

“Nor do I absolve myself of the blame for indeed the human soul is certainly prone to evil unless my Lord does bestow His Mercy: but surely my Lord is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.”¹

The inner self-ego [*nasf*] is an enemy, and an enemy should never be trusted. It is in effect the worst of enemies, as the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said,

¹ Surah 12 Yusuf Verse 53.

أَعْدَى عَدُوِّكَ نَفْسَكَ الَّتِي بَيْنَ جَنْبَيْكَ.

“Your worst enemy is your inner self-ego, which is between your flanks.”

By Allah, how inspired is the verse of the poet,

تَوَقَّ نَفْسَكَ لَا تَأْمَنْ عَوَائِلَهَا * فَالنَّفْسُ أَحَبُّ مِنْ سَبْعِينَ شَيْطَانًا.

Beware of your self-ego, and trust not its mischief;

Surely the self-ego is worse than seventy devils.

اللَّهُمَّ اَلْهَمْنِي رَشْدِي، وَأَعِزَّنِي مِنْ شَرِّ نَفْسِي.

“O Lord inspire me with guidance,

And protect me from the evil of my inner self.”

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أَشْرِكَ بِكَ وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ، وَأَسْتَغْفِرُكَ لِمَا لَا أَعْلَمُ.

“O Lord! I seek Your protection,

Against committing idolatry[*shirk*] towards You knowingly,

And seek Your forgiveness for that of which I am not aware!”

This Treatise is divided into Several Chapters

I have begun each chapter in this treatise by saying, “You must do such and such a thing!” this being addressed particularly to myself, my brother who was the cause for writing the treatise, and generally to every Muslim who reads it.

This expression affects the heart of those it is addressed to, and I hope that having used it, I will escape the reproaches and threats directed against those who say but do not do, and who know but do not act. For if I address myself saying, “You must do this!” this indicates that the thing has not yet become a reality through my practising of what I know and that I am still at the stage of urging myself to practice what I preach. In this manner, I will neither be deceiving the believers nor forgetting myself, for this is how Allah, the Exalted has described those who have no understanding when He, Exalted is He says,

أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ.

“Do you enjoin right conduct on the people, and forget to practice it yourselves, and yet you study the Scripture? Will, you not understand?”¹

And I will thus be saved from the threats directed at those who speak but do not act, as in the words of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him and his family,

يُؤْمَرُ بِالْعَالِمِ إِلَى النَّارِ، فَتَنْدَلِقُ أَقْتَابُهُ فَيَدُورُ بِهَا فِي النَّارِ كَمَا يَدُورُ الْحِمَارُ بِالرَّحَا
فَيَجْتَمِعُ عَلَيْهِ أَهْلُ النَّارِ، فَيَقُولُونَ مَا بَالُ الْأَبْعَدُ قَدْ آذَانَا عَلَى مَا بِنَا فَيَقُولُ:
إِنَّ الْأَبْعَدَ كَانَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْخَيْرِ وَلَا يَأْتِيهِ وَيَنْهَى عَنِ الشَّرِّ وَيَأْتِيهِ.

“A scholar [*ilm*] will be ordered to the Fire; his entrails will spill out, and he will drag them along as he moves around the Fire, just like a donkey turning in a mill. The people in the Fire will gather around him and say, “Why does this repudiated man make us suffer more than we do already?” And he will say, “This repudiate enjoined good but did not do it and forbade evil but committed it.”

And he, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

الْعَالِمُ الَّذِي يَعْلَمُ وَلَا يَعْمَلُ مِثْلُ الْفَتِيلَةِ تُضِيءُ لِلنَّاسِ وَتَحْرِقُ نَفْسَهَا.

“A scholar who is knowledgeable and yet does not practice is like the candle wicks that provide light to mankind and yet burns itself.”

And he, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَرَزْتُ لَيْلَةً أُسْرِيَ بِي بِرَجَالٍ تَقْرِضُ شِفَاهَهُمْ بِمَقَارِضَ مِنْ نَارٍ، فَقُلْتُ، مَنْ أَنْتُمْ؟
فَقَالُوا: كُنَّا نَأْمُرُ بِالْخَيْرِ وَلَا نَأْتِيهِ وَنَنْهَى عَنِ الشَّرِّ وَنَأْتِيهِ.

“When I was made to journey at night, I passed by men whose lips were being clipped with scissors of fire. I asked, “Who are you?” and they said, “We enjoined good and did not do it, and forbade evil and committed it.”

These threats come true for those who summon to Allah when their real intention is to acquire the things of this world, and who urge

¹ Surah 2 al Baqara Verse 44.

to good but persistently abandon it, who warn against evil but persistently commit it, who fall into ostentation and wish to make a reputation for themselves. As for those who summon others to Allah's door while upbraiding their selves, forbidding them to be neglectful, and urging them to show zeal, it is hoped that they are saved.

Anyway, the one who knows and teaches what he knows but does not practice is in a better state, a wiser way, and has a safer outcome than the one who knows, but neither practices nor teaches.

A man of little understanding may perhaps say, "There is already a sufficient abundance of books, there is no benefit in compiling new ones in this age." Such a man would be correct insofar as books are indeed abundant and should be sufficient, but not in saying that no benefit is to be gained from compiling further books now. People's hearts are naturally attracted to everything new, and Allah gives them at each time knowledge clothed in the form best suited to the age. Books reach distant places and survive the scholar's death, who receives the merit of spreading knowledge and is accounted by Allah among the teachers and summoners to Him, even after he has entered his grave. As the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said,

مَنْ أُنْعَشَ لِسَانُهُ حَقًّا يَعْمَلُ بِهِ مَنْ بَعْدَهُ أُجْرِي عَلَيْهِ أَجْرُهُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ.

"The one whose tongue gives life to virtue that those who come after him practice continues to receive its reward until the Day of Rising."

I have called the treatise The Book of Assistance, Support, and Encouragement for such Believers as a Desire to Follow the Way of the Afterlife.

I ask Allah, the Exalted, to make me and all other believers benefit from it and to render my compilation of it purely for the sake of His Noble Countenance.

It is now time to begin.

وَبِاللّٰهِ التَّوْفِيقُ

Success is from Allah;

I seek His help, depend on Him entirely, and ask Him to grant me success in being correct in my intentions and deeds. For indeed, He is the Guardian of this work and has control over it.

وَهُوَ حَسْبِي

He is sufficient for me

وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ

And He is the Best of Patrons.

Chapter One

Certainty [*Yaqin*]

You must, O beloved brother, strengthen and improve your certainty. For when certainty prevails in the heart and establishes itself therein the unseen becomes as if seen, and the man aided by providence says, like Ali, may Allah exalt his face, said, “Were the cover [*hijab*] to be removed, I would not increase in certainty.”

Certainty is power, firmness and stability of faith so great that it becomes as a towering mountain which no doubts can shake and no illusions rock. Instead, uncertainties and illusions disappear entirely, and when they come from outside are neither listened to by the ear nor heeded by the heart. The Devil cannot approach the possessor of such certainty; he flees from him, fears his very shadow, and is content to keep at a safe distance. As the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said,

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَيَفْرُقُ مِنْ ظِلِّ عُمَرَ وَمَا سَلَكَ عُمَرُ فَجًّا إِلَّا سَلَكَ الشَّيْطَانُ فَجًّا آخَرَ.

“Satan is afraid of the shadow of Umar, and whenever Umar takes a road, that Satan will always take another.”

Certainty derives its power and excellence from many things. The first, most essential and pivotal of these is that the servant listens attentively with his heart as well as his ears to verses and hadiths relating to God, His Majesty, Perfection, Magnitude, and Grandeur; His Uniqueness in creating and deciding, ruling and compelling; likewise, to the truthfulness and perfection of the Messengers, the

miracles they were aided with, and the sundry chastisements which befell those who opposed them. That these are sufficient to bring about certainty is indicated by His Word, Exalted is He!,

أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِهِمْ أَنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ.

“And is it not enough for them that we have sent down to you the Book which is recited to them?”¹

The second is to learn from looking at the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and the wondrous and astounding creatures that Allah made them abound. That this brings about certainty is indicated by His saying, Exalted is He!

سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْآفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ.

“Soon will We show them Our signs on the horizon, and in their souls, until it becomes manifestly clear to them that this is the Truth.”²

The third is to behave according to what one believes, outwardly [*dzahir*] and inwardly [*batin*], zealously, and to the limits of one's resources. That this brings about certainty is indicated by His saying, Exalted is He!

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا.

“For those who strive in Our cause, We will certainly guide them to our Paths.”³

The fruits of proper certainty are among many other things, compliance in Allah's promise, confidence in what He has guaranteed, turning to Allah with pure longing, abandoning all things which distract from Him, continuously returning to Him in all circumstances, and spending all one's energy in seeking His good pleasure.

In sum, certainty is the essential thing, and all other noble ranks, praiseworthy traits of character and good works are its branches and results.

¹ Surah 29 Ankabut Verse 51.

² Surah 41 Fussilat Verse 53.

³ Surah 29 Ankabut Verse 69.

Virtues and actions are strong or weak, sound or unsound, according to the strength or otherwise of certainty. Luqman, peace be upon him, said, “Action is possible only in the presence of certainty; a servant acts in obedience only to the extent that he has certainty, and a man becomes neglectful in his actions only when his certainty diminishes.”

This is why the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said,

“Certainty is the whole of faith.” الْيَقِينُ الْإِيمَانُ كُلُّهُ.

Those who are faithful have three Degrees of Certainty

The first level is that of the People of the Right Hand¹, this is a firm belief, but with the possibility of becoming doubtful or shaky under certain circumstances, and this is called faith.

The second level is that of those Nearest to Allah², which is the possession of the heart by faith and it’s establishing itself therein so firmly that its opposite becomes no longer possible or even imaginable. In this degree, the unseen becomes as seen, thus becomes a certainty.

The third level is that of the Prophets and the True Saints [*siddiqun*] who are their perfect heirs. Here the unseen becomes seen, which thing is called unveiling [*kashf*] and contemplation³.

There are grades within each degree: all are good, but some better than others.

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ.

“Such is the Bounty of Allah, which He bestows on whom He will: and Allah is the Lord of the highest bounty.”⁴

¹ Surah 56 Waqiah Verse 7, “Companions of the Right Hand” أَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ

² Surah 56 Waqiah Verse 88, “he be of those Nearest to Allah.” فَأَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ

³ Surah 4 An Nisaa Verse 69, “All who obey Allah and the messenger are in the company of those on whom is the Grace of Allah, of the prophets, the sincere, the witnesses (who testify), and the Righteous. Ah! what a beautiful fellowship!”

⁴ Surah 62 Al Jumaah Verse 4.

Chapter Two

Intention [*Niat*]

You must, O my brother, improve the soundness and sincerity of your intentions, examine them, and reflect well before embarking on your actions. For intentions [*niat*] are the bases of deeds; according to them, your deeds will either be good or ugly, sound or unsound. The Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said.

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نُوَى.

“Deeds are only according to intentions; each man has that which he intended.”

You must, therefore, utter no word, do no action, and decide no matter without the intention of drawing nearer thereby to Allah and seeking the reward He has assigned, through His beneficence and grace, to the intended act. And know that drawing nearer to Him can only be done through the obligatory and supererogatory devotions that He has indicated through His Messenger, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him.

A sincere intention may change the merely licit into the holy, for means are judged according to their ends. For example, one may eat to get the strength to perform devotions or sleep with one's wife to obtain a son who would worship Allah.

It is a condition of the sincere intention that behaviour does not misrepresent it. For instance, a man who seeks knowledge claiming that he intends to practice and teach it will be proved insincere in his

intention if, when he becomes able to, he does not do so. Or a man who pursues the world and claims that he is doing so only that he may be independent of other people and be able to give charity to the needy and help his relatives will be proved ineffectual in his intention should he not do so when ready.

Intentions do not affect sins, just as purification does not change that which is, by its very nature, impure. A man who goes along with another who is slandering a Muslim, then pretends that he only wanted to humour him, is himself a slanderer. Anyone who refrains from the enjoining of good and the forbidding of evil and acts that he only did so to protect himself against the culprit, is his partner in evil doing. A malicious intention attached to a good deed spoils it and renders it malicious; likewise, when one performs good deeds for the sake of wealth and prestige.

Strive, my brother, always to intend that your obedience be solely for the sake of Allah and that whatever licit things you may use are only to help you to obey Him.

You should know that many intentions can attach to a single act and that each of them will attract its full reward. An example of this in devotional activities is when someone reads the Qur'an intending to commune with Allah, which acts he will indeed do but also to extract from it different kinds of knowledge, for the Qur'an is the very treasure of knowledge, to profit those who listen or happen to hear or any other good intention. And an example in licit matters is to eat to obey to follow the command of your Lord in His saying, Exalted, is He!

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ.

“O ye who believe! Eat of the good things that We have provided for you.”¹

Intend by so doing to acquire strength for devotion, and to put yourself in a situation where you must thank your Lord, for He says; Transcendent is He!

¹ Surah 2 Al Baqara Verse 172.

كُلُوا مِنْ رِزْقِ رَبِّكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لَهُ.

“Eat of the Sustenance (provided) by your Lord and be grateful to Him.”¹

You can analogously apply these two examples to all other devotional and licit activities and always do your best to increase your good intentions.

The word ‘intention’ [*Niat*] can have one of two meanings. The first is the aim which made you decide, do, or say something. The intention taken in this sense, is usually better than the act itself when the action is good, and worse when the work is evil. He, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said,

يَتَى الْمُؤْمِنِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ عَمَلِهِ.

“The intention of a believer is better than his action.”

Notice how he specifically mentioned the believer. The second meaning is your decision and determination to act, taken in this sense; the intention is not better than the act.

A man, when he decides to do something, can only be in one of three situations.

First, he decides and acts.

Second, he decides but fails to act while able to. The way to evaluate these two situations can be found in that which ibn ‘Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them both, has transmitted to the effect that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَتَبَ الْحَسَنَاتِ وَالسَّيِّئَاتِ

“Indeed, Allah has written good and evil deeds.”

Then he, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, explained them clearly and said,

¹ Surah 34 Saba Verse 15.

فَمَنْ هَمَّ بِحَسَنَةٍ فَلَمْ يَعْمَلْهَا كَتَبَهَا اللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حَسَنَةً كَامِلَةً وَإِنْ هَمَّ بِهَا فَعَمِلَهَا كَتَبَهَا اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ عِنْدَهُ عَشْرَ حَسَنَاتٍ إِلَى سَبْعِمِائَةٍ ضِعْفٍ إِلَى أَضْعَافٍ كَثِيرَةٍ. وَإِنْ هَمَّ بِسَيِّئَةٍ فَلَمْ يَعْمَلْهَا كَتَبَهَا اللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حَسَنَةً كَامِلَةً. وَإِنْ هَمَّ بِهَا فَعَمِلَهَا، كَتَبَهَا اللَّهُ سَيِّئَةً وَاحِدَةً.

“Anyone who intends a good deed but does not perform it, Allah records it as one complete good deed, whereas should he intend and then perform it, Allah records it as ten good deeds, up to seven hundredfold, and yet more multiplications. If he intends an evil deed and does not do it, Allah records it as one full good deed; if he intends and then does it, Allah records it as one evil deed.”

The third case is when he determines upon something which he is for the time being unable to do and says, “Were I able, I would do such and such a thing.” He receives the same as the one who acts, whether this is for or against him. The evidence for this is in the sayings of he, may blessings and peace be upon him,

النَّاسُ أَرْبَعَةٌ: رَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ عِلْمًا وَمَالًا فَهُوَ يَعْمَلُ فِي مَالِهِ بِعِلْمِهِ. فَيَقُولُ آخَرُ: لَوْ آتَانِي اللَّهُ مِثْلَ مَا آتَاهُ، عَمِلْتُ مِثْلَ عَمَلِهِ فَهُمَا فِي الْأَجْرِ سَوَاءٌ. وَرَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ مَالًا وَلَمْ يُؤْتِهِ عِلْمًا فَهُوَ يُخْطِئُ فِي مَالِهِ بِجَهْلِهِ، فَيَقُولُ آخَرُ: لَوْ آتَانِي اللَّهُ مِثْلَ مَا آتَاهُ، عَمِلْتُ مِثْلَ عَمَلِهِ فَهُمَا فِي الْوِزْرِ سَوَاءٌ.

“People are of four kinds: a servant to whom Allah has given knowledge and wealth, and who uses his knowledge to manage his wealth; another who says, “Were Allah to give me just as He has given so and so I would act like him.” Their rewards are equal. And a man to whom Allah has given wealth but no knowledge, who mishandles his wealth through his ignorance; while another says, “Were Allah to give me as He has given so and so, I would act like him.” Their burdens of sin are equal.”

Chapter Three

Vigilance

You must, O my brothers, be mindful of Allah, the Exalted, in all your movements and times of stillness, at every moment, with every blink of the eye, with every thought, wish or any other state. Feel His nearness to you! You should know that He looks and is aware of your state [*maqam*], that nothing that you conceal is hidden from Him,

وَمَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْ رَبِّكَ مِنْ مِّثْقَالِ ذَرَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ.

“And Nothing is hidden from your Lord so much as the weight of an atom on the earth or in heaven.”¹

وَإِنْ تَجَهَّرَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَإِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ وَأَخْفَى.

“Whether you pronounce the word aloud, it does not matter, for verily He knows what is secret and what is yet more hidden.”²

And He is with you wherever you may be with His knowledge, awareness and power. If you are of the righteous, He will guide, assist and protect you. Have modesty before your Lord as you should; make sure that He never sees you in a situation which He has forbidden you, and never misses you where Allah has commanded you to be; worship Him as if you saw Him, for even if you do not see Him, He sees you.

Whenever you notice in your soul any laziness in His worship or inclination to disobedience, remind it that Allah hears and sees you

¹ Surah 10 Yunus Verse 61.

² Surah 20 Ta Ha Verse 7.

and knows your secrets and secret conversation. If this reminding does not benefit it because of the inadequacy of its knowledge of the Majesty of Allah, the Exalted, remind it of the two noble angels who record good and evil deeds, and recite to it.

إِذْ يَتَلَقَّى الْمُتَلَقِّيَانِ عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ قَعِيدٌ مَّا يَلْفُظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ.

“Behold, two guardian angels appointed to record his doings and noted them, one sitting on the right and one on the left. Not a word does he utter, but there is with by him, ready to note it.”¹

If this reminding does not influence it, remind it of the proximity of death, that it is the nearest of all hidden and awaited event; frighten it of its sudden pouncing, whereby if it does come when it is in an unsatisfactory state it will end up in endless destruction. If this threat is of no use, remind it of the immense reward which Allah has promised those who obey Him, and the painful torment with which He has threatened those who disobey Him. You should say to it, “O soul! After death, there will be no opportunity to repent, and there will be, after this life, only the Garden or the Fire. Choose, if you will, obedience, the consequence of which is triumph, contentment, immortality in vast gardens, and looking at the Face of Allah, the Generous, the Beneficent; or else disobedience, the consequence of which is degradation, humiliation, mockery, deprivation, and imprisonment between layers of fire.” Endeavour to cure your soul with such reminders when it neglects obedience and inclines to rebellion, for they are useful medicines for the heart’s diseases.

If you find emerging in your heart, when you call to mind the fact that Allah observes you, a shyness that prevents you from disobeying Him and drives you to exert yourself in obeying Him, you have something of the realities of vigilance [*muraqaba*].

You should know that vigilance is one of the noblest stations, lofty positions, and high degrees. It is the station of excellence [*ihsan*] indicated in his saying, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him,

¹ Surah 50 Qaf Verses 17-18.

الْإِحْسَانُ أَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ.

“Excellence is to worship Allah as if you saw Him, for if you do not see Him, He sees you.”

Each believer has faith that nothing on earth or in heaven is concealed from Allah, that Allah is with him wherever he is, and that none of his movements or times of stillness is hiding from Him. But the important thing is that this awareness is permanent and that its results appear, the least of which is that he does nothing, when alone with Allah, that he would be ashamed of should a man of virtue see him, this is a rare situation. It eventually leads to that which is rarer still, whereby the servant is immersing in Allah, the Exalted annihilated in Him and thus rendered unaware of all else, absent from creation through his contemplation of the True King, in

مَقْعَدِ صِدْقٍ عِنْدَ مَلِكٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍ.

“an Assembly of Truth, in the Presence of a Sovereign Omnipotent.”¹

¹ Surah 54 Al Qamar Verse 55.

Chapter Four

The Inner and Outer Self

You must, O my brother, improve your inward aspect until it becomes better than your virtuous outward appearance, for the former is where the gaze of the Real obtains, while the latter is where the envious gaze of creation exist. Allah, the Exalted ever mentioned the inward and the outward in His Book without beginning with the inward. And the Prophet used to pray, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him,

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ سِرِّي خَيْرًا مِنْ عَلَانِيَتِي وَاجْعَلْ عَلَانِيَتِي صَالِحَةً.

“O, Allah! Make my inward better than my outward and make my outward virtuous.”

When the inward [*batin*] is good or virtuous, the outward [*dzahir*] is also inevitably so, for the outward always follows the inward, whether for good or evil. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, has said,

إِنَّ فِي الْجَسَدِ مُضْغَةً إِذَا صَلَحَتْ صَلَحَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ، وَإِذَا فَسَدَتْ فَسَدَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ
أَلَا وَهِيَ الْقَلْبُ.

“In the body, there lies a small piece of flesh; when it is good the rest of the body is good also, and when it is corrupt the rest of the body becomes corrupt also: it is the heart.”

You should know that the one who claims to have a thriving inward but whose outward has been corrupted by his abandoning outward acts of obedience is a pretender and a liar.

The one who exerts himself in the reform of his outward aspect by caring about the way he dresses and appears, speaks, moves, sits, stands, and walks, but leaves his inward full of repellent attributes and vile traits, is one of the people of affectation and ostentation, who have turned away from the Lord.

You should beware, O brother, of doing actions in secret that is seen by people would make you ashamed and worried about being censored. Once a person with divine knowledge said, “A Sufi is not a Sufi unless everything that is in him is on a plate and open in the marketplace, he would not be ashamed of anything that came to light.” If you cannot make the inward better than your outward, the least that you can do is to make them equal, so that you behave equally well privately and publicly in obeying Allah’s injunctions, avoiding His prohibitions, respecting what He has made sacred, and hastening to please Him. The first step a servant should take on the path of special knowledge is this. You should know that!

وَبِاللّٰهِ التَّوْفِيقُ

Success is from Allah.

Chapter Five

Regular Devotions

You must fill up your time with acts of worship so that no period elapses, whether by night or by day, without being used in some act of goodness. Thus the blessings [*Baraka*] within time is made manifest in this way, the purpose of a life fulfilled and the approach to Allah, the Exalted, made constant.

You should allocate specific periods for your routine activities such as eating, drinking, and working for a livelihood.

You should know that no state can be sound in the presence of neglect, and no wealth useful in the presence of heedlessness.

The Proof of Islam, Imam Al Ghazali, may Allah spread his benefit, said, “You should structure your time, arrange your regular devotions [*awrad*], and assign to each function a set period during which it has priority but which it does not overstep. For if you abandon yourself to neglect and purposelessness, as the cattle do, and do anything that may occur to you at any time, it happens to occur to you, most of your time is waste. Your time is your life, and your life is your capital; it is the basis of your transactions with Allah, and the means to attain to everlasting felicity, in the proximity of Allah, the Exalted. Each of your breaths is priceless because it is an irreplaceable jewel, and when it passes away, it never returns.”

You should not occupy all your time with only one *wird*, even if it be the best, for you would then miss the blessings of multiplying

and varying your routine of divine worship [*awrad*]. Each *wird* has a particular effect on the heart, a light, a flow of assistance [*madad*], and has a rank with Allah.

Furthermore, when you move from one *wird* to another, you escape becoming bored, lazy, impatient, or weary. Ibn ‘Ata’illah as-Shadhili, may Allah have mercy on him, said, “Because Allah, the Truth, knew of the presence of boredom in you, He created a variety of acts of obedience.”

You should know that the routine of divine worship [*awrad*] have a significant effect in illuminating the heart and controlling the senses, but these only appear and become established with perseverance and repetition, and their performance at specifically allocated times.

If you are not one of those who fill all their night and daytime hours with devotional activities, then assign to yourself some *awrad* to persevere with at specific times that you make up for it if you missed it. Thus, your soul becomes accustomed to keeping to them; when your soul despairs of your abandoning them altogether when you miss them, it will hasten to perform them in time. My master, Shaykh AbdurRahman al-Saqqaf, may Allah be pleased with him, has said, “Whoever has no *wird* is like a monkey!” Another gnostic [*Arif*] has said, “The arrival of blessings depends on the routine of divine worship [*awrad*]; therefore, the man who outwardly has no *wird* has no inward aspect of any consequence.”

Be moderate and keep to the middle way in everything. Choose those acts and deeds which you are capable of persevering in. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said,

أَحَبُّ الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَدْوَمُهَا وَإِنْ قَلَّ.

“The acts most pleasing to Allah are the most constant, even if few.”

And he, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said,

خُذُوا مِنَ الْأَعْمَالِ مَا تُطِيقُونَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَمَلُّ حَتَّى تُمَلُّوا.

“Choose the acts of which you are capable, for Allah will not grow weary before you.”

Satan, may Allah cursed him, way is to entice the seeker [*murid*] at the beginning of his quest to be excessive in his devotional activities, the purpose is to make him retreat, either by giving up acts of goodness altogether, or performing them incorrectly, and the accursed one does not care with which of these two he afflicts a man. Take note that the routine [*awrad*] usually take the form of supererogatory ritual prayers, Qur'an recitations, the acquisition of knowledge, remembrance [*dhikr*] and reflection [*fikr*].

We shall now mention some of the actions to perform during these divine religious activities.

You must have a routine of supererogatory prayers, in addition to the textually [*fardu*] established ones, and should assign a definite time for it and a particular number which you can continuously sustain. Some of our virtuous predecessors, may Allah have mercy on them, had a *wird* of one thousand prostrations [*raka'ats*] each day and night. Such, for instance, was Ali, the son of al-Husayn, may Allah be pleased with them both. Others had a *wird* of five hundred, three hundred and so on.

You should know that the ritual prayer has an outer form and an inner reality. You will not have established the prayer to Allah, the Exalted, and its outward proprieties, such as correct standing, prostration, glorifying [*tasbih*] recitation, bowing and so forth until you have established both its outer aspect and its reality. As for its outward aspect, this constitutes those obligatory conditions set for it by Allah. While its fact is that the person is present with Allah, sincerely intend it to be purely for Allah's sake, approach Allah, the Exalted, with complete resolution. The person collects his heart so that he restrict his thought to the prayer and nothing else, and maintain the courtesies necessary for communing with Allah, the Exalted.

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

إِنَّمَا الْمُصَلِّي مُنَاجٍ رَبِّهِ.

“The man in prayer is communing with his Lord.”

And he, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said,

إِذَا قَامَ الْعَبْدُ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ أَقْبَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ بِوَجْهِهِ.

“When the servant stands to pray, Allah turns His Face toward him.”

You should not occupy yourself with unspecified supererogatory prayers at a time designated for a practice [*sunna*] which the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, either did or spoke about until you have completed the maximum designated number. An example of this is the prostrations [*raka'ats*] laid down before and after the obligatory [*fard*] prayers. These are sufficiently well known as to need no further comment. Another example is the odd [*witr*] prayer, which is a well-established and specific prayer. Some scholars' opinion that it is obligatory.

And the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَتَرَّ يُحِبُّ الْوِتْرَ فَأَوْتِرُوا يَا أَهْلَ الْقُرْآنِ.

“Indeed, Allah is Odd [*witr*], and He loves what is odd: therefore, you should observe the *witr*, if you subscribed to the Quran.”

And he, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

الْوِتْرُ حَقٌّ فَمَنْ لَمْ يُؤْتِرْ فَلَيْسَ مِنَّا.

“The Odd is the Truth. Those who did not observe it is not with us.”

The maximum is eleven prostrations [*raka'ats*] and its appropriate minimum three. For those who have an established habit of rising for prayer during the latter part of the night, it is better to perform it then.

And the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

اجْعَلُوا آخِرَ صَلَاتِكُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ وَتَرًا.

“Make the Odd prayer your last prayer for the night.”

But those who have not formed such a habit would do better to perform it after the night [*'isha'*] prayer.

A similar example is the mid-morning [*dhuha*] prayer, which is a very beneficial and blessed prayer. Its maximum is eight prostrations, though some have said twelve, and it is minimum two. The best time for it is when the sun is high and about a quarter of the day has passed by. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said,

يُصْبِحُ عَلَى كُلِّ سَلَامٍ مِنْ أَحَدِكُمْ صَدَقَةٌ فَكُلُّ تَسْبِيحَةٍ صَدَقَةٌ، وَكُلُّ تَحْمِيدَةٍ صَدَقَةٌ، وَكُلُّ تَهْلِيلَةٍ صَدَقَةٌ، وَكُلُّ تَكْبِيرَةٍ صَدَقَةٌ، وَأَمْرٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ صَدَقَةٌ، وَنَهْيٌ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ صَدَقَةٌ، وَيُجْزِيهِ مِنْ ذَلِكَ كُلِّهِ رَكْعَتَانِ يُرْكِعُهُمَا مِنَ الصُّحَى.

“When morning comes by upon you, a charity is due for each of your joints. Each recitation glorifying Allah [*tasbih*] is a charity. Each praise of Allah [*tahmid*] is a charity. Each recitation of the Oneness of Allah [*Tahlil*] is a charity. Each recitation of the Greatness of Allah [*takbir*] is a charity. Enjoining good and forbidding evil is a charity and yet performing two prostrations of the mid-morning [*dhuha*] prayer would accomplish all of that.”

If this sound *hadith* had been the only one transmitted concerning the merit of this prayer, it would have been sufficient.

Another example is the prayer between the sunset [*maghrib*] and night [*'isha*] prayers. Its maximum is twenty *raka'ats*, and it is average six. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said,

مَنْ صَلَّى بَيْنَ الْعِشَاءَيْنِ رَكْعَتَيْنِ بَنَى اللَّهُ لَهُ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ.

“Allah erects a palace in the Garden for the one who prays two *raka'ats* between the two-night prayers.”

And he, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَنْ صَلَّى بَعْدَ الْمَغْرِبِ سِتَّ رَكَعَاتٍ لَا يَتَكَلَّمُ بَيْنَهُنَّ بِسُوءٍ عُدْلَنْ عِبَادَةً اثْنَتَيْ عَشْرَةَ سَنَةً.

“The one who prays six *raka'ats* after the sunset prayer and does not speak ill in between will have them equal the worship of twelve years.”

It is a prophetic practice [*sunna*] to enliven to the period between the two-night prayers with devotions. Many hadiths and other traditions have transmitted regarding its merit. It should be enough to know that when Ahmad ibn Abul-Hawari asked his shaykh, Abu Sulayman, may Allah have mercy on them, whether he should fast by day or enliven the period between the two-night prayers. He advised him to do both, to which he said, “I cannot, for if I fast, I become occupied with breaking my fast at that time.” He replied, “If you cannot do both, then leave daytime fasting and enliven the time between the night prayers.”

Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, said, “The Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, never entered my house after the late-night prayer [*isha*] without praying four or six *raka’ats*. And he may Allah’s blessings, and peace be upon him said,

أَرْبَعُ رَكَعَاتٍ بَعْدَ الْعِشَاءِ كَمِثْلِهِنَّ مِنْ لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ.

“Four *raka’ats* after *isha* is the like as Night of Destiny [*laylatul qadr*]”

It is an incumbent upon you to pray at night, for he, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said,

أَفْضَلُ الصَّلَاةِ بَعْدَ الْمَكْتُوبَةِ صَلَاةُ اللَّيْلِ.

“The best prayer after the prescribed ones is the night-time prayer.”

And he may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

فَضْلُ صَلَاةِ اللَّيْلِ عَلَى صَلَاةِ النَّهَارِ كَفَضْلِ صَدَقَةِ السِّرِّ عَلَى صَدَقَةِ الْعَلَانِيَةِ.

“The superiority of the night prayers over day prayers is like the superiority of concealed over public charity.”

And it has been related that concealed charity is seventy times better than a public charity. He may Allah’s blessings, and peace be upon him, said,

عَلَيْكُمْ بِقِيَامِ اللَّيْلِ فَإِنَّهُ دَأْبُ الصَّالِحِينَ قَبْلَكُمْ وَإِنْ قِيَامَ اللَّيْلِ قَرِيبَةٌ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَمَنْهَاجُ الْإِثْمِ وَتَكْفِيرُ لِّلْسَيِّئَاتِ وَمَطْرَدَةٌ لِلدَّاءِ عَنِ الْجَسَدِ.

“It is incumbent upon you to observe the Night Vigil, for it was the way of the virtuous who came before you, it draws you nearer to your

Lord, atones for your sins, forbids you from evil, and protects the body from sickness.”

You should know that the one who prays after the *Isha* prayer has observed the Night Vigil. Some of the righteous predecessors used to pray their *witr* early in the night; however, rising after some sleep constitutes a defeat for the devil, a fight against the ego, and contains a wondrous secret. The observance of the Night Vigil [*tahajjud*] is Allah command to His Messenger to do in His saying,

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ عَسَىٰ أَن يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُودًا.

“And pray in the small hours of the morning: it would be an additional prayer or spiritual profit for you: soon will your Lord raise you to a Station of Praise and Glory!”¹

It is related that Allah wonders at a servant who rises from the comfort of his bed and wife to pray. He takes pride in him before His angels and turns His noble Face towards him.

You must know that it is an ugly thing in the seeker of the hereafter not to rise in the night; how can he not when a seeker should always be asking for more and exposing himself to His gifts at all times.

For he, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said,

إِنَّ فِي اللَّيْلِ لَسَاعَةً لَا يُوَافِقُهَا عَبْدٌ مُسْلِمٌ يَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ خَيْرًا مِنْ أَمْرِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا أَعْطَاهُ إِيَّاهُ وَذَلِكَ كُلُّ لَيْلَةٍ.

“Indeed, there is a time at night when a Muslim encounters whereby in which he asks Allah for some good of the world and of the hereafter but that He grants it to him. Every night this happens.”²

Allah revealed to His prophets in one of the scriptures,

كَذَبَ مَنْ يَدْعِي وَإِذَا جَنَّ اللَّيْلُ نَامَ عَنِّي، أَلَيْسَ كُلُّ مُحِبٍّ يُحِبُّ الْخُلُوةَ بِحَبِيبِهِ.

¹ Surah 17 Al Israa Verse 79.

² Tradition related by Muslim.

“The one who claims to love Me has lied because when night falls, he sleeps and leaves Me. Does not every lover love to be alone with his beloved?”

Shaykh Ismail ibn Ibrahim al-Jabarti, may Allah have mercy on him, said, “Allah has gathered every goodness into the night, and no sainthood was ever determined or formally granted to a saint except by night.”

My master, alAydarus Abdullah ibn Abu Bakr, said, “The one who wishes for the Lordly Purity should break himself in the depths of the night.”

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said,

يَنْزِلُ اللَّهُ كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا حِينَ يَبْقَى ثُلُثُ اللَّيْلِ الْآخِرِ فَيَقُولُ: هَلْ مِنْ دَاعٍ فَاسْتَجِيبَ لَهُ، هَلْ مِنْ مُسْتَغْفِرٍ فَأَغْفِرَ لَهُ، هَلْ مِنْ سَائِلٍ فَأَعْطِيَهُ، هَلْ مِنْ تَائِبٍ فَأَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِ، حَتَّى يَطْلُعَ الْفَجْرُ.

“Every night Allah descends to the Terrestrial Heaven when only the last third of the night remains, and says, “Is anyone praying, that I may answer him? Is anyone seeking forgiveness, that I may forgive him? Is anyone asking, that I may give to him?” this continues until the break of day.”

Had this been the only hadith exhorting to Night Vigils it would have sufficed.

What else do we need when both the Book and the Prophetic practices are full of encouragements and exhortations to it? For those who know Allah or the Gnostics [*ariff billah*] have in their night vigils divine unveilings and subtle experiences which they receive in their hearts, of the felicity of nearness to Allah, the pleasures of intimacy with Him and of communing and conversing with Him, Exalted is He.

As such, one of them said, “If the people of the Garden are in a state similar to ours, they are indeed living pleasantly!” And yet another said: The people of the night during their night vigils are as

the people of pleasures in their pleasures.” And another said, “For the last forty years nothing aggrieved me but the break of day.” This felicity occurs only after enduring the bitterness and hardships which are in vigils, as Utba al Ghulam said, “I endured the night for twenty years, then enjoyed it for twenty more.”

Should you ask, “What should I recite during the night prayers, and how many *raka'ats* should I pray?” then know that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings, and peace be upon him, had no set recitation in his Night Vigil [*tahajjud*]. It is good to recite the Qur an, one part after another, so that you complete it in a month, or less or more according to your energy.

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, related the maximum number of *raka'ats* is thirteen; some also reported seven and nine, but the most frequent figure is eleven.

The total purport of all the relevant hadiths is that it is encouraged and recommended, when you wake up, for you to rub sleep off your face with your hands and say,

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَحْيَانَا بَعْدَ مَا أَمَاتَنَا وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ.

“All praises and thanks belong to Allah who raised us after death and to Whom we return to.”

And recite the verse 190 of Surah 3 Ala Imran until the last verses of the Surah Ala 'Imran.

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاجْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ.

“Behold! in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of Night and Day, there are indeed Signs for men of understanding.”

Then brush your teeth with the *siwak*, perform a full ablution [*wudu*], pray two light *raka'ats*, then add to the eight long ones. You can pray them in units of two, or four, or even do the full eight with only one salutation [*salam*], for all these were reported.

If you then find that you still have energy, pray any additional prayers that you may wish, then pray three *raka'ats* as *witr*, either with

one salutation or two. Recite in the first *raka'at* Surah 87 *al-A'la* (The Most-High) and the second *raka'at* Surah 109 *al-Kafirun* (The Disbelievers) and the third Surah 112 *Al-Ikhlaas* (Sincerity), and the last two surahs Surah 113 *Al-Falaq* (Dawn) and Surah 114 *Al-Nas* (Mankind).

Do not confuse that the *witr* which is eleven *raka'ats* is one thing and the *raka'ats* we have just mentioned another. However, all that we have said about the night prayers were related from the Messenger of Allah's may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him.

You should know that!

وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ!

For Allah Hears and Knows everything!

Chapter Six

Reciting the Quran

It is incumbent upon you to have a routine of recitation of the Mighty Book every day and night. The least you should do is to recite one chapter [*juz*] so that you complete it once a month, and the most is to achieve it every three days.

You should know that great merit attaches to reciting the Quran, and influence in illuminating the heart. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

أَفْضَلُ عِبَادَةٍ أُمَّتِي قِرَاءَةُ الْقُرْآنِ.

“The best devotions for my nation's is the recitation of the Quran.”

Ali, may Allah honour him, said, “The one who recites the Quran while standing in prayer receives one hundred rewards for each letter; the one who recites it outside the prayer but in a state of ritual purity receives twenty-five rewards for each letter, and the one who recites it without ritual purity receives ten rewards for each letter.”

It is incumbent upon you to understand what you recite and caution against reciting a large amount to the exclusion of reflection and correct recitation.

You must reflect and comprehend while you recite; slow, melodious recitation will assist you in this. Feel in your heart the Magnitude of the Speaker, Transcendent and Exalted is He! and that

you are before Him, reciting His Book to Him, in which He addresses His commands, prohibitions, counsels and exhortations to you.

When reading verses on unification and glorification be full of reverence and awe, when reading verses of promises and threats be full of hopeful expectation and apprehension, and when reading the commands and prohibitions be thankful, acknowledge your shortcomings, ask for forgiveness and determine to show ardour.

You should know that the Quran is the ocean wherefrom the jewels of knowledge, and from it, the treasures of understanding extracted. Any believer who Allah grant the way to understand it, his Opening [*fath*] becomes permanent, his light complete, his knowledge vast, and he never tires of reading it night and day, for he has found therein his goal and his purpose. Such is the quality of the sincere seeker.

Shaykh Abu Madyan, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “A seeker is not a true seeker until he can find in the Quran everything that he desires.”

It is incumbent upon you to read those *surahs* and verses which are recommended in the Prophetic Practices [*sunna*] at particular times.

Some of these are to recite every night, Surah 32 The Prostration [*asSajda*]¹, Surah 67 The Kingdom [*alMulk*]², Surah 56 The Event [*al-Waaqia*] (iii), and the last two verses of Surah 2 The Heifer [*al-Baqara*]³ every night before going to sleep.

¹ A hadith narration mentioned to invoke the Verse 17 of Surah 32 *AsSajda* for those who desires to go to heaven.

² Surah 67 *AlMulk* is known for protection from the torture of the the grave.

³ In addition to this verses, it is encourage by Habib Salem Ashatteri to recite the first 5 and last 5 verses of Surah 18 The Cave [*Al Kahf*] as invocation to assist getting up for the Night Vigil whilst Habib Umar binHafiz recommended the first 10 and last 10 verses.

And to recite the Surah 44 Smoke [*Al-Dukhan*] on Sunday and Thursday evenings, and Surah 18 The Cave [*alKahf*] on Thursday night and Friday day.

Read, if you can, the seven surahs called “Seven Saving Ones” [*Munjiyaat Saba’a*]¹ every night, for their merits are great.

And also in the morning and evening to recite the first few verses of Surah 57 The Iron [*al-Hadid*], the last few verses of Surah 59 Al-Hasyr, Surah 112 The Sincere [*al-Ikhlās*] and the last two surahs Surah 113 *Al-Falaq* (Dawn) and Surah 114 *Al-Nas* (Mankind) three times each.²

Similarly, to recite Surah 112 The Sincere [*al-Ikhlās*] and the last two surahs Surah 113 *Al-Falaq* (Dawn) and Surah 114 *Al-Nas* (Mankind) together with Surah 2 Verse 255 known as Verse of the Throne and Surah 109 The Disbelievers [*Al Kafiroon*] immediately before going to sleep, making these the last thing that you utter and closing with the verse below.

وَاللَّهُ يَقُولُ الْحَقَّ وَهُوَ يَهْدِي السَّبِيلَ.

“For Allah tells the Truth, and He guides to the (right) Way.”³

¹ These *surahs* are Surah 32 The Prostration [*asSajda*], Surah 67 The Kingdom [*alMulk*], Surah 56 Time [*al-Waaqia*], Surah 44 Smoke [*Al-Dukhan*], Surah 59 The Mustering [*al-Hashr*], Surah 36 *Yaa-Sin* and Surah 76 The Man [*Al Insan*].

² Imam Alhadad has arranged these collectively into the Wirdul Latiff for easy recitation of the seeker.

³ Surah 33 Al Ahzab Verse 4.

Chapter Seven

Acquiring Knowledge

You should have a routine [*awrad*] of reading useful knowledge, which helps to increase your understanding of the Essence of Allah His Attributes Acts and favours. Thus, makes you aware of His commands and prohibitions, leads you to renounce the things of this world and only wish for the hereafter, and brings your faults, the defects in your acts and the plots of your enemy to your notice.

This knowledge is present in the Book and the Prophetic practices [*sunnah*] and the writings of the learned jurisprudence leaders [*imams*]. Imam al-Ghazali collected these in his highly valuable books. Those who have religious perspicacity are well steeped in knowledge and have complete certitude have high esteem for his books. If you wish to travel the path and arrive at the levels of Realization, you must make it a habit to read them. The Ghazali books are unique among the writings of the correct divine spiritual path [*Sufism*]¹ that they are comprehensive, explicit and significantly effective within a short time.

It is incumbent upon you to read extensively the Books of Prophetic Practices [*Hadiths*] and Quranic Commentaries [*Tafsir*] and

¹ To worship Allah as if you see Him, even if you do not see, He see you. A path taken by the worshippers to reach Allah, namely access to knowledge and exercise it through diligence in worship and avoid the endings of bad morals, and practice excellence in conduct and in every aspect of religious and worldly lives [*dunia*].

of those who practice and upheld the faith in general, for this is where a comprehensive opening and perfect path are to be found, as a person who knows Allah once said.

However, you must be wary of whatever their treatises include by way of complex matters and bare realities. These are present in most of the writings of Shaykh Muhyi al-Din ibn Arabi, and a few of the Imam al-Ghazali treatises such as ‘The Ascent’ [*al-Mikraj*] and ‘The Withheld’ [*al-Madnun Bibi*]. Shaykh Zarruq gave in his ‘The Rules’ [*Tasis Al-Qawa'id*] a warning about such books but did not mention the writings of Shaykh Abdul Karim al-Jili, for he was a latecomer; however, all of his writings should, for the sake of safety is avoid.

Should someone say, “There is no harm in reading such books, for I take that which I understand and leave alone that which I do not.” I would say, “You speak fairly; however, what we fear for you is that that which you think you understand, you understand incorrectly and ‘thereby diverge from the Straight Path’, as has happened to some who were assiduous readers of those books, and ended up in heresy and unbelief, and talked about incarnation [*hulul*] and union [*ittihad*].’

فَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ

There is neither ability nor power

إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ.

Save but Allah the Most-High, the Most Formidable.

Chapter Eight

Remembrance

It is incumbent upon you to have a routine [*awrad*] of remembering Allah [*dhikr*], which you must define with either a determined time or number. Under these circumstances, there is no harm in using a rosary to keep count.

You should know that remembrance is the pillar of the Path, the key to realisation, the weapon of the seekers, and the unfolding of sainthood, a gnostic [*arif*] once said. And Allah the Exalted says,

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ.

“When you do remember Me; I will remember you.”¹

And He, the Exalted says,

فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ.

“Remember Allah while standing, sitting, and on your sides.”²

And He, the Exalted says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا.

“O you who believe! Remember Allah, and do this often, abundantly!”³

¹ Surah 2 Al Baqara Verse 152.

² Surah 4 an Nisaa Verse 103

³ Surah 33 Al Ahzab Verse 41

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said,

يَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى، أَنَا عِنْدَ ظَرِّ عَبْدِي بِي، وَأَنَا مَعَهُ حِينَ يَذْكُرُنِي، فَإِنْ ذَكَرَنِي فِي نَفْسِهِ ذَكَرْتُهُ فِي نَفْسِي، وَإِنْ ذَكَرَنِي فِي مَالٍ ذَكَرْتُهُ فِي مَالٍ خَيْرٍ مِنْهُمْ.

“Allah the Exalted says, “I am as My servant thinks Me to be and am with him when he remembers Me: when he remembers Me within himself I remember him within Myself, and when he remembers Me in a company I remember him in a better company.”

يَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: أَنَا جَلِيسُ مَنْ ذَكَرَنِي.

“Allah the Exalted says, “I am the companion of him who remembers Me.””

And, he may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

أَلَا أَنبِئُكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ أَعْمَالِكُمْ، وَأَزْكَاها عِنْدَ مَلِيكِكُمْ وَأَرْفَعُهَا فِي دَرَجَاتِكُمْ وَخَيْرٌ لَكُمْ مِنْ إِنْفَاقِ الذَّهَبِ وَالْوَرَقِ، وَمَنْ أَنْ تَلْقَوْا عَدُوَّكُمْ، فَتَضْرِبُوا أَعْنَاقَهُمْ وَيَضْرِبُوا أَعْنَاقَكُمْ؟ قَالُوا: بَلَى، قَالَ: ذِكُرِ اللَّهَ.

“Shall I not inform you of the best of your deeds, the purest in the sight of your Lord, and the most elevating to your degrees, which is better for you than spending gold and silver, and then meeting your enemy so that you strike at their necks and they strike at yours?” They said, “Yes,” And he said, “The remembrance of Allah!”

Remembrance has fruits and consequences which those who persevere in it with good manners and attentiveness find. The least of these is to see it so sweet and pleasurable that every worldly pleasure that one knows becomes insignificant. The highest is to become extinct in the Remembered, to the remembrance, and all else.

The one who sits in a secluded place, in a state of purity, facing the Qibla, keeping his limbs still and his head down, and then remembers Allah with an attentive heart and complete courtesy, will see in his heart an apparent influence of the remembrance. If he perseveres, the lights of proximity will descend upon his heart, and the secrets of the unseen will become unveiled for him.

The best remembrance is that which involves both the tongue and the heart. The remembrance of the heart is to be fully aware of the meaning of that which flows from the tongue, for example, the meaning of transcendence and unification when one utters the words of glorification [*tasbih*] and unification [*tahlil*].

Out of remembering and reciting aloud or silently, what is most useful for the invoker is that which is better for his heart.

Remembrance is the continual, permanent routine recital [*wird*], so strive to keep your tongue moist with it in all circumstances, except at times where for example, another routine, recitation or reflection, is due which cannot be at the same time as a remembrance. These and other devotions are, however, included in the more general sense of remembrance.

Do not confine yourself to only one kind of remembrance [*dhikr*]; you should preferably have a regular recital [*wird*] of every variety.

Be careful to keep to the textually transmitted [*hadith*] invocations and prayers which follow the ritual prayers, morning and evening, before going to sleep, on waking, and at all other specified times and recurrent occasions. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, made them a practices [*sunnas*] only so that his nation would find in them the means for obtaining the goodness and escaping the evil which occurs at these times and occasions. The one who, having neglected them, suffers something he dislikes and is separated from his Beloved, should blame only himself.

Anyone who wishes to practice that which we have mentioned should consult the Imam al-Nawawi's book, *al-Adhkar* (The Invocations); may Allah have mercy on him and reward him well on behalf of all Muslims. The most emphasised is that after the ritual prayers as reported to invoke after each prescribed prayer,

اللَّهُمَّ اَعِنِّي عَلَى ذِكْرِكَ وَشُكْرِكَ وَحُسْنِ عِبَادَتِكَ.

“O Allah! Help me to remember You, and to show appreciation and thank You and to practice the best of worship to You!”

And then to recite,

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ (۳۳) وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ (۳۳) اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ (۳۳)

“the glorification of Allah [*tasbih*], the All Praise and Thanks belong to Allah [*tahmid*], and that Allah is Great [*takbir*] thirty-three times each, and to complete the count to a hundred by saying,

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ، وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

“There is no god but Allah, Alone and He has no partners, His is the sovereignty, His is all praise, and He has the power to do all things.”

For dawn [*fajr*], afternoon [*asar*] and sunset [*maghrib*] prayers, add the phrase “He causes life and cause death” to the above sentence and repeat ten times before moving your legs and talking,

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ، وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ، يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ، وَهُوَ عَلَى

كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ. (عشر مرات)

“There is no God but Allah. Alone and without any partners. He is Sovereignty, and all praise belongs to him. He causes life and death. And He is Powerful over all thing and beings.” (Ten Times)

Similarly, recite in the morning and evening,

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ (مائة مرات)

“Transcendent is Allah, and all praise belongs to Allah.” (100 Times)

And,

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ. (مائة مرات)

“Transcendent is Allah, and all praise belongs to Allah, and there is no god but Allah, and Allah is Greater].” (100 Times)

Similarly, recite every day one hundred times,

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ، وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ.

“There is no god but Allah, Alone and He has no partners, His is sovereignty, and His is all praise, and He has the power to do all things.”

You must adopt a routine of sending salutations to the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him. It will be a connection between you and the Prophet, and a door through which assistance from his presence flows in abundance to you For indeed, he, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said,

مَنْ صَلَّى عَلَيَّ مَرَّةً صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ بِهَا عَشْرًا.

“The one who send salutation upon me once, with it upon him Allah records ten times.”

And he, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said,

أَحْبُّكُمْ إِلَيَّ وَأَقْرَبُكُمْ مِنِّي مَجْلِسًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَكْثَرُكُمْ عَلَيَّ صَلَاةً.

“The most beloved to me and the nearest in sitting to me on the Day of Rising are those of you who send the most salutation on me.”

Allah has ordered you in His Wise Book to do this when the Exalted says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا.

“O you who believe! Send your blessings on him and salute him with all respect.”¹

So, obey and do it abundantly if you wish, add salutations [*salam*] to include his family.

In particular, he may Allah's blessings, and peace be upon him said, repeat it frequently on Thursday night and Friday,

أَكْثِرُوا مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ عَلَيَّ فِي اللَّيْلَةِ الْغَرَاءِ وَ الْيَوْمِ الْأَزْهَرِ.

“Increase the number of your Salutations on me in the White Night and Bright Day.”

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّم،

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ.

Allah's blessing be upon him and his family

All Praises and thanks belong to Allah

The Lord of All the Universe.

¹ Surah 33 Al Ahzab Verse 56.

Chapter Nine

Reflection

You should have a routine of reflection [*fikr*] in every twenty-four hours, for which you should set aside one or more hours. The best time for reflection is the one in which are the least preoccupations, worries and most potential for the heart to be present, such as the depths of the night.

You should know that the state of a person's religious and worldly affairs depends upon the soundness of his reflection. Anyone who has a taste of it has an abundant share of everything good.

It narrated that, تَفَكَّرُ سَاعَةً خَيْرٌ مِنْ عِبَادَةِ سَنَةٍ

“An hour's reflection is better than a year's worship.”

Ali, may Allah honour him, said, “There is no worship like reflection.”

And one of the Gnostics [*Arif*]; may Allah have mercy on them all, said, “Reflection is the lamp of the heart; if it departs, the heart will have no light.”

The ways of reflection are many. One, which is the noblest of them, is to reflect on the wonders of Allah's dazzling creation, the inward and outward signs of His Ability, and the signs He has scattered abroad in the Realm of the earth and the heavens.

This kind of reflection increases your knowledge of the Essence, Attributes, and Names of Allah.

He has encouraged this when He the Exalted says,

قُلْ انْظُرُوا مَاذَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ.

“Say: Look at what is in the heavens and the earth!”¹

Reflect on the wondrous creatures He has made, and on yourself. Allah, the Exalted says,

وَفِي الْأَرْضِ آيَاتٌ لِلْمُوقِنِينَ وَفِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ.

“On the earth are signs for those of assured Faith, as also in your selves: Will you not then see?”²

You should know that you must reflect on the favours of Allah, and His bounties which He caused to reach you. The Exalted says,

فَاذْكُرُوا آلَاءَ اللَّهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ.

“Remember the favours of Allah that you may succeed.”³

He, the Exalted says,

وَأِنْ تَعَدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا.

“Should you attempt to count the favours of Allah, you would not be able to do so.”⁴

He, the Exalted says,

وَمَا بِكُمْ مِّنْ نِّعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ.

“All the good things that you possess are from Allah.”⁵

This kind of reflection results in the heart filling with the love of Allah and continuously rendering thanks to Him inwardly and outwardly, in a manner that pleases and satisfies Him.

¹ Surah 10 Yunus Verse 101.

² Surah 51 AdDhaariat Verse 20 – 21.

³ Surah 7 Al Araaf Verse 69.

⁴ Surah 14 Ibrahim Verse 34.

⁵ Surah 16 AnNahl Verse 53.

You should know that you should reflect on Allah's complete awareness of you, and His seeing and knowing all about you.

Allah, the Exalted says,

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ.

"It was We Who created man, and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him: for We are nearer to him than his jugular vein."¹

He, the Exalted says,

وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ.

"And He is with you wherever you may be. Indeed, Allah sees well all that you do."²

He, the Exalted says,

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَا يَكُونُ مِنْ نَجْوَى ثَلَاثَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ.

"Did you not realise that Allah does know all that is in the heavens and on earth? There is not a secret consultation between three persons, but He makes the fourth among them."³

The fruit of this kind of reflection is that you feel ashamed before Allah should He see you where He has forbidden you to be or miss you where He has commanded you to be or do.

You should know that you must reflect on your shortcomings in worshipping your Lord, and you are exposing yourself to His wrath should you do what He has forbidden you.

He, the Exalted says,

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ.

"I have only created Jinns and men, that they may serve Me."⁴

¹ Surah 50 Qaaf Verse 16.

² Surah 57 Al-Hadid Verse 4.

³ Surah 58 Al Mujaadila Verse 7.

⁴ Surah 51 adDhaariyat Verse 56.

He, the Exalted says,

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ.

“Did you then think that We had created you in jest and that you will not return to Us (for an account)?”¹

And He, the Exalted says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ.

“O man! What has seduced thee from thy Lord Most Beneficent?”²

And He, the Exalted says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَدًّا فَمَا لَاقِيهِ.

“O Mankind! Verily you must strive to attain meeting your Lord, painfully striving until you shall meet Him.”³

This kind of reflection increases your fear of Allah encourages you to blame and reproach yourself, to avoid remissness and persevere in your zeal.

You should know that you must reflect on this worldly life, its numerous preoccupations, hazards, and the swiftness with which it perishes, and upon the hereafter, and its felicity and permanence. Allah the Exalted says,

كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ.

“Thus, does Allah render the signs clear to you, that you may reflect on this world and the hereafter.”⁴

And He, the Exalted says,

بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا. وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ.

“Nay and behold, you prefer the life of this world; when the Hereafter is better and more enduring.”⁵

¹ Surah 23 Al Mu'minun Verse 115.

² Surah 82 Al Infitaar Verse 6.

³ Surah 84 Al Inshiqaq Verse 6.

⁴ Surah 2 Al Baqara Verse 219-220.

⁵ Surah 76 Al Alaa Verse 16 -17.

And He, the Exalted says,

وَمَا هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَهُوٌّ وَلَعِبٌ وَإِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ لَهِيَ الْحَيَوَانُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ.

“What is the life of this world but amusement and play? but verily the Home in the Hereafter, that is life indeed, if they but knew.”¹

This kind of reflection results in losing all desire for the world, and in wishing for the hereafter.

You should know that you should reflect on the imminence of death and the regret and remorse which occur when it is too late.

And He, the Exalted says,

قُلْ إِنْ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَفِرُّونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مُلَاقِيكُمْ، ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيَسْئَلُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ.

“Say: “The Death from which you flee will truly overtake you: then will you be sent back to the Knower of things secret and open: and He will tell you the truth of the things that you did!”²

And He, the Exalted says,

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِ. لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ كَلَّا إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَائِلُهَا.

“(In Falsehood will they be) Until, when death comes to one of them, he says: “O my Lord! send me back (to life), in order that I may work righteousness in the things I neglected.” “By no means! It is but a word he says.”³

And He, the Exalted says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ. وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ. وَأَنْفِقُوا مِن مَّا رَزَقْنَاكُم مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَّ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ فَيَقُولَ رَبِّ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنِي إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ فَأَصَّدَّقَ وَأَكُن مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ. وَلَن يُؤَخِّرَ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِذَا جَاءَ أَجَلُهَا وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ.

¹ Surah 29 Al-Ankabut Verse 64.

² Surah 62 Al-Jumaat Verse 8.

³ Surah 23 Al Mu'minun Verse 99-100.

“O you who believe! Let not your riches or your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah. If any act thus, the loss is their own. And spend something in charity out of the substance which We have bestowed on you, before Death should come to any of you and he should say, “O my Lord! Why did You not give me respite for a little while? I should then have given largely in charity, and I should have been one of those who do good deeds”. But to no soul will Allah grant respite when the time appointed for it has come, and Allah is well acquainted with all that you do.”¹

The benefit of this kind of reflection is that hopes become short, behaviour better, and gather provision for the Appointed Day. You should know that you should reflect on those attributes and acts by which Allah has described His friends and His enemies, and on the immediate and delayed rewards which He has prepared for each group. Allah, the Exalted says,

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ. وَإِنَّ الْفُجَّارَ لَفِي جَحِيمٍ.

“As for the Righteous, they will be in bliss; And the Wicked, they will be in the Fire.”²

And He, the Exalted says,

أَفَمَنْ كَانَ مُؤْمِنًا كَمَنْ كَانَ فَاسِقًا لَا يَسْتَوُونَ.

“Is then the man who believes no better than the man who is rebellious and wicked? Not equal are they.”³

And He, the Exalted says,

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَعْطَى وَاتَّقَى. وَصَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَى. فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ لِلْيُسْرَى. وَأَمَّا مَنْ بَخِلَ وَاسْتَغْنَى. وَكَذَّبَ بِالْحُسْنَى. فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ لِلْعُسْرَى. وَمَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُ مَالُهُ إِذَا تَرَدَّى. إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا لَلْهُدَى. وَإِنَّ لَنَا لَلْآخِرَةَ وَالْأُولَى. فَأَنْذَرْتُكُمْ نَارًا تَلَظَّى. لَا يَصْلَاهَا إِلَّا الْأَشْقَى. الَّذِي كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّى. وَسَيَجْزِيهَا الْآتِقَى. الَّذِي يُؤْتِي مَالَهُ يَتَزَكَّى. وَمَا لِأَحَدٍ عِنْدَهُ مِنْ نِعْمَةٍ تُجْزَى. إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِ الْأَعْلَى. وَلَسَوْفَ يَرْضَى.

¹ Surah 63 Al Munafiqun Verse 9 -11.

² Surah Al Infitar Verse 13 – 14.

³ Surah 32 As Sajdah Verse 18.

“So, he who gives in charity and fears Allah. And in all sincerity testifies to the best. We will indeed make smooth for him the path to Bliss. But he who is a greedy miser and thinks himself self-sufficient, and gives the lie to the best, We will indeed make smooth for him the path to Misery. Nor will his wealth profit him when he falls headlong into the Pit. Verily We take upon Ourselves to guide, and surely on to Us belong the End and the Beginning. Therefore do I warn you of a Fire blazing fiercely; None shall reach it but those most unfortunate ones who give the lie to Truth and turn their backs. But those most devoted to Allah shall be removed far from it. Those who spend their wealth for increase in self-purification and have in their minds expect no favour from anyone nor a reward in return, but only the desire to seek for the Countenance of their Lord Most High. And soon will they attain complete satisfaction.”¹

And He, the Exalted says,

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ. الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ. أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا لَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ.

“The believers are those who when Allah is mentioned, feel a tremor in their hearts. When they hear His signs rehearsed, find their faith strengthened, and put all their trust in their Lord. They establish regular prayers and spend freely out of the gifts We have given them for sustenance. In truth, such are the believers. They have grades of dignity with their Lord, and forgiveness, and generous sustenance.”²

And He, the Exalted says,

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ.

“Allah has promised to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds that He will, of surety grant them in the land, the inheritance of power, as He granted it to those before them.”³

¹ Surah 92 Al Layl Verse 5 – 7.

² Surah 8 Al-Anfal Verse 2 – 4.

³ Surah 24 An Nur Verse 55.

And He, the Exalted says,

فَكُلًّا أَخَذْنَا بِذَنبِهِ فَمِنْهُمْ مَن أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِ حَاصِبًا وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ أَخَذَتْهُ الصَّيْحَةُ وَمِنْهُمْ
مَّنْ حَسَفْنَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ أَعْرَفْنَا وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ
يُظْلِمُونَ.

“Each one of them We seized for his sin: Some of them We sent a violent hailstones tornado; a mighty Blast caught some; some We caused the earth to swallow up, and some We drowned in the waters: It was not Allah Who injured or oppressed them. They injured and oppressed their souls.”¹

And He, the Exalted says,

الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ مِّن بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمُنْكَرِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَقْبِضُونَ
أَيْدِيَهُمْ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَنَسِيَهُمْ إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ. وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ
وَالْكُفَّارَ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا هِيَ حَسْبُهُمْ وَلَعْنَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ.

“The Hypocrites, men and women, have an understanding with each other: They enjoin evil, and forbid what is permitted and are close with their hands. They have forgotten Allah; so He hath forgotten them. Verily the Hypocrites are rebellious and perverse. Allah hath promised the Hypocrites men and women, and the rejecters, of Faith, the fire of Hell: Therein shall they dwell: Sufficient is it for them: for them is the curse of Allah and an enduring punishment.”²

And He, the Exalted says,

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ
حَكِيمٌ. وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
وَمَسَاكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِي جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ.

¹ Surah 29 Al Ankabut Verse 40.

² Surah 8 AtTawbah Verse 67 – 68.

“The Believers, men and women, are protectors one of another: they enjoin what is permitted, and forbid what is evil: they observe regular prayers, practise regular charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger. On them will Allah pour His mercy: for Allah is Exalted in Power, Wise. Allah hath promised to Believers, men and women, gardens under which rivers flow, to dwell therein, and beautiful mansions in gardens of everlasting bliss. But the greatest bliss is the good pleasure of Allah: that is the supreme felicity.”¹

And He, the Exalted says,

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا وَرَضُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاطْمَأْنَأُوا بِهَا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا غَافِلُونَ. أُولَئِكَ مَاوَاهُمُ النَّارُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ. إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ يَهْدِيهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ بِإِيمَانِهِمْ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ فِي جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ. دَعَوَاهُمْ فِيهَا سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَتَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَامٌ وَآخِرُ دَعْوَاهُمْ أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ.

Those who rest not their hope on their meeting with Us, but are pleased and satisfied with the life of the present, and those who heed not Our Signs. Their abode is the Fire, because of the evil they earned. Those who believe, and work righteousness, their Lord will guide them because of their faith: beneath them will flow rivers in gardens of bliss. Their cry will be therein, “Glory to You, O Allah!” And “Peace” will be their greeting therein! and the close of their call will be, “Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds!”²

The fruits of this kind of reflection are that you come to love the fortunate, habituate yourself to emulating their behaviour and taking on their qualities, and detest the wretched and habituate yourself to avoiding their behaviour and traits of character.

Were we to allow ourselves to pursue the various channels of reflection we would have to forgo the brevity which we intended. That which we have mentioned should suffice the man of reason.

¹ Surah 9 At-Tawbah Verse 71 – 72.

² Surah 10 Yunus Verse 7 – 10.

You should, with each kind of reflection, bring to mind those verses, hadiths and other narratives relating to it. We have given an example of this by quoting some of the verses related to each kind of reflection.

Beware of reflecting on the Essence of Allah and His Attributes in the wish to understand their nature and how they exist. No one ever became enamoured of this without falling into the abysses of negation or the traps of anthropomorphism.

Indeed, a well-known narration from the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him and his family, stated,

تَفَكَّرُوا فِي آيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تَتَفَكَّرُوا فِي ذَاتِ اللَّهِ، فَإِنْ لَنْ تَقْدِرُوهُ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ.

“Reflect on the signs of Allah and do not reflect on His Essence, for you will never be able to give Him His due honestly.

The aim and spirit of having a divine routine of worship [awrad] is the presence with Allah. Aim for it; you will reach it only if you travel the road that leads to it, which is performing the external activities and striving to be present with Allah during them. When you persevere in this, you become immersed in the lights of Proximity, and the sciences of gnosis emanate upon you, at which your heart becomes wholly intent on Allah and presence becomes its nature and well-established quality. At that time, you have to exert yourself to be attentive to creatures when you need to, and you may not always be able to. Such a condition results in one becoming absent from creation, engrossed in the Creator, and extinct to anything that is not Him. It also leads to other states unique to the people of Allah. The foundation of all this is perseverance in outward devotions and taking care to perform them well and with an effort to be attentive with Allah.

You should beware of leaving a reflection [wird] for fear of not being able to persevere in it; for this is foolishness. You should not do, in each period, whatever happens, to suit your energy and free time; on the contrary, you should have a minimum that you perform, which you can add to whenever you feel energetic, but never fall below when you feel lazy.

You should know that hastening to acts of goodness, being careful with acts of worship and persevering in obedience, constitute the way of the Prophets and Saints. Both at the beginning and end of their affair, for they are the creatures with the most knowledge of Allah, and it is therefore not surprising that they are the most worshipful, obedient, and fearful of Him, Mighty and Majestic is He! The attentiveness of a servant is equal to his love for his Lord. Love is consequent upon knowledge: in as much as Allah's servant grows more knowledgeable of Him, so also shall he love Him more and worship Him more abundantly. If you become too busy amassing worldly things and following passions, you may not have time for *awrad* and to keep acts of worship, strive to give your Lord an hour at the end of the day for you to occupy yourself with glorifying Him, asking forgiveness, and other kinds of devotions. There is a report that stated that Allah, the Exalted says,

ابْنَ آدَمَ! اجْعَلْ لِي سَاعَةً مِنْ أَوَّلِ نَهَارِكَ وَسَاعَةً مِنْ آخِرِهِ أَكْفِكَ مَا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ.

“O Son of Adam! Give Me an hour at the beginning of your day and an hour at its end, and I will take charge for you, of all that is in between.”

Another report stated that when the record of a servant delivered to Allah at the end of each day, and, if at its beginning and end there is goodness, Allah, the Exalted says to the angel, “Erase what is in between!” Allah's graciousness as He, the Exalted says,

ذَلِكَ مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ.

“that comes of the grace of Allah to us and mankind: yet most men are not grateful and not thankful.”¹

¹ Surah 12 Yusuf Verse 38.

Chapter Ten

Follow the Book and *Sunnah* Prophetic Traditions

You must hold firmly to the Book and the prophetic traditions [*sunnah*]. Take refuge in them, for they are the upright religion of Allah and His straight path. Those who adhere to them find safety, profit, guidance and protection, while those who deviate from them go astray, grieve, lose, and broken. Let them govern you and control what you do, and consult them in your every affair, in obedience to the religious counselling towards Allah and that of His Messenger. Allah, the Exalted says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ، فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ، ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا.

“O you who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with authority among you. If you differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if you do believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is the best and most suitable for final determination.”¹

The phrase “refer it to Allah and the Messenger” means to refer it to Allah’s Book, Al-Quran and the practices of the Prophet [*sunnah*].

¹ Surah 4 An-Nisaa Verse 59

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings be upon him and his family and peace, said,

أَوْصِيَكُمْ بِمَا إِنْ اِعْتَصَمْتُمْ بِهِ فَلَنْ تُضَلُّوا أَبَدًا: كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَسُنَّتِي.

“I bid you take care of that with which, if you hold to it firmly, you will never err: the Book of Allah and my *Sunnah*.”

If it pleases you to be well-guided along the white road in which there is neither crookedness nor curvature¹, then measure all your intentions, traits, acts, and words against the Book and *Sunnah*, then retain whatever conforms to them and abandon whatever does not. And always be cautious and follow the better alternative. Never innovate in religion, nor follow the ways of the non-believers, or else you will lose both this world and the hereafter, which thing is the manifest loss².

Beware of novel things and invented opinions, for he, upon him, be blessings and peace, said,

كُلُّ مُخَدَّتَةٍ بِدْعَةٍ وَكُلُّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ.

“Every addition is an innovation, and every innovation is an error.”

And he, may peace be upon him said,

مَنْ أَحَدَثَ فِي أَمْرِنَا مَا لَيْسَ مِنْهُ فَهُوَ عَلَيْهِ رَدٌّ.

“Anyone who adds to this affair of ours what does not belong to it is to be ejected.”

There are three kinds of innovations. The first is ‘good innovation’ [*bidah hasanah*]. The well-guided leaders have opined in conformity with the Book and *Sunnah*, intending to choose that which is more beneficial, more useful and finer. For example, Abu Bakr's collection of the whole Quran into one volume, Umar's institution of military pensions and the *Tarawih* prayers, Uthman's arrangement of the Quran and institution of a first call to prayer on Friday, and Ali's rules for fighting heretical rebels. May Allah bestow His good pleasure upon the four Caliphs!

¹ Surah 20 Ta Ha Verse 107.

² Surah 22 Al Hajj Verse 11.

The second kind of innovation is one that is ‘blameworthy only from renunciation and contentment’ [*bidah madhmuma*] such as the excessive use of licit clothes, foodstuffs and houses.

The third kind is the ‘absolutely blameworthy innovation’ [*bidah madhmumat mutlaqaan*], which contradicts the provisions of the Book and *Sunnah*, or the consensus of the nation. Innovators have fallen into this very frequently with regards the principles [*usul*], but infrequently about the branches [*furuq*]. The person who does not adhere exceedingly to the Book and *Sunnah*, and does not do his utmost to emulate the Messenger, should not be paid attention to nor attended. He pretends that he has a certain degree before Allah, the Exalted, even if he be able to fly in the air and walk on water and have distances folded up and the laws of nature broken for him. Actions like this frequently happen to demons, magicians, soothsayers, talisman makers, astrologers, and others who are similarly in error. These can only be considered charismata [*karamat*] and confirmation, and not enticements and delusion when rectitude [*istiqama*] is present in the one in whom they appear. Such deceivers can only deceive the mob and the base people who worship Allah while harbouring doubts. As for those endowed with reason and intelligence, they know full well that believers differ in their nearness to Allah according to the differences between them in following the Messenger, and the more complete the emulation, the more perfect the nearness to Allah, and the higher knowledge gnosis [*Arif*] of Him.

Abu Yazid al-Bistami once went to visit a man who was said to be a saint. He sat down waiting for him in a mosque until the man came out and spat on the wall of the mosque, at which Abu Yazid went away without speaking to him. He said, “How can one be entrusted with Allah’s secrets which are not careful to maintain the courtesies of the Law?”

Al-Junaid, may Allah have mercy on him, said, “All roads are blocked except to the person who follows in the footsteps of the Messenger, may Allah’s blessings be upon him and his family and peace.”

And Sahl ibn 'Abdullah al-Tustari, may Allah have mercy on him, Allah, no guide but the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings be upon him and his family and peace, no provision but be mindful of one's duties to Allah [*taqwa*], and no work but to have patience and fortitude in these actions."

You should know that not everyone is capable of independently evaluating all his affairs, outward and inward, against the Book and *Sunnah*, for only erudite scholars can do this. Should you ever find difficulty doing so, go to one of those to whom Allah commanded you have recourse in His saying, Exalted is He,

فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ.

"So ask the people of remembrance if you do not know"¹.

The people of remembrance are those who know Allah and His religion, practice what they know for His sake, have no desire for the world, are not distracted by commerce from His remembrance², summon to Him clear-sighted³, and to whom His secrets are unveiled. The presence of one such on the face of the earth has become so rare that some great men have even said that they no longer exist. The truth is that they do exist, but because of the unawareness of the elite and the turning away of the commonalty, Allah has hidden them under the cloak of His possessiveness and surrounded them with veils of obscurity. However, those who seek them with sincerity and zeal will not, by Allah's Will, fail to find one of them. Sincerity [*ikhlas*] is a sword that is never used against anything without cutting it. The earth is never without those who uphold the matter for Allah. And the Prophet, may blessings and peace be upon him said,

¹ Surah 16 AnNahl Verse 43. In the context of the sentence it also mean "if you realise this not, ask of those who possess the Message".

² Surah 24 An Nur Verse 37. "By men whom neither traffic nor merchandise can divert from the Remembrance of Allah, nor from regular Prayer, nor from the practice of regular Charity: Their (only) fear is for the Day when hearts and eyes will be transformed (in a world wholly new)."

³ Surah 12 Yusuf Verse 108. "Say you, "This is my way: I do invite unto Allah, on evidence clear as the seeing with one's eyes, I and whoever follows me."

لَا تَزَالُ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْ أُمَّتِي ظَاهِرِينَ عَلَى الْحَقِّ لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ مَنْ نَوَّاهُمْ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ.

“A group in my nation will ways exist, victoriously defending the truth, unharmed by those who oppose them, until the command of God arrives.”

These are the stars of the earth, the carriers of the Trust, the deputies of the Chosen One, and the heirs of the Prophets;

رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ

Allah is well pleased with them,

وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ،

And they are well pleased with Him.

أُولَئِكَ حِزْبُ اللَّهِ،

They are the Party of Allah.

أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ.

Indeed it is the Party of Allah that will achieve Felicity¹.

¹ Surah 58 Al Mujaadila Verse 22.

Chapter Eleven

Doctrine or Creed

[*Aqidah*]

It is incumbent upon you to continuously correct and protect your beliefs and conform to the pattern of the party of salvation, who are those known from among the other Islamic factions as the people of the *Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah*. They are those who firmly adhere to the way of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings be upon him and his family and peace, and of his Companions.

If you look with a sound understanding of those passages relating to the sciences of faith in the Book, the prophetic practices [*sunnah*], and the sayings of the virtuous predecessors, whether they be Companions or Followers, you will know for sure that the truth is with the party called the Ashari. Named after Shaykh Abu'l-Hasan al-Ash'ari, may Allah have mercy on him, who systematised the foundations of the creed of the people of the truth, and recorded its earliest version, these being the beliefs which the Companions and the best among the Followers agreed upon. These constitute the doctrine of the people of truth in every time and place, and all the Sufis, as Abu'l Qasim alQushayri, may Allah have mercy on him, indicated at the beginning of his Treatise.

It is, may Allah be praised and thanks, our doctrine, and that of our Husayni brothers known as the family of Abu Alawi, and of our predecessors from the time of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's

blessings and peace be upon him, down to the present day. When the Imam that emigrate for the sake of Allah, the ancestor of the said sayyids, my lord Ahmad ibn Isa ibn Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Jafar as-Sadiq may Allah be pleased with them, left Iraq. He saw how innovations had appeared, passions multiplied, and opinions diverged in Iraq, he emigrated from it and travelled the earth until he reached the land of Hadhramaut, where he stayed until his death. And Allah blessed his descendants, a great many of whom became renowned for their knowledge, worship, sainthood, and gnosis. Through the blessings [*baraka*] of this trustworthy imam who fled from sedition to protect his religion, they remained safe from the innovations and the following of misguiding passions into which certain other factions of the Prophetic House fell. May Allah reward him on our behalf with the best reward He has ever granted a father on behalf of his children; may He raise his degree along with his noble forefathers in the Highest Heaven [*Illiyun*] and permits us to join them in goodness and safety, having neither changed our religion nor fallen into temptation. He is the Most Mercy of the Merciful. The Maturidis are the same as the Ash'aris in the above regard.

It is incumbent upon each believer to protect his faith by learning the creed of one of the imams who are incontestably worthy of respect, and well-grounded in knowledge. And I can see none more precise, more comprehensive and free from the suspect and misleading things than that of the Imam al-Ghazali, may Allah be pleased with him. The creed is in the first chapter of the volume on the foundations of beliefs in *The Revival of the Religious Sciences* [*Ihya' Ulum al-Din*]. Should you wish for, more then look into the Jerusalem Epistle [*Al-Risala al-Qudsiya*] in the third chapter of the same book.

Do not delve too deeply into theology [*kalam*] and do not discuss it much to truly acquire knowledge [*marifa*], for it cannot achieve through that science. If you want to learn this knowledge, indeed, you must travel its path. That is to adhere to minding one's duty [*taqwa*] to Allah, the Exalted, outwardly and inwardly. Next is to meditate on verses and hadiths, reflect on the Realm of the heaven and the earth to draw a lesson, refine the soul's attributes, reduce its

densities through discipline. Then, polish the mirror of the heart by continuous remembrance [*dhikr*] and reflection [*fikr*] and by shunning everything that might distract you from devoting yourself entirely to this affair. The above is the way to attain, and if you tread it, you will, by Allah's Will, find what you are seeking. Sufis have struggled against their souls, disciplined them and weaned them of their habits and familiar things because they knew that on this depends the fullness of gnosis, and on the fullness of gnosis depends the realisation of the station of servitude [*ubudiyya*] which is the aim of the Gnostics and the hope of those who realise.

رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ.

May Allah be pleased with them all.

Chapter Twelve

Religious Obligations

It is incumbent upon you to observe the obligations and the prohibitions and increase your supererogatory devotions. For if you do this purely for the sake of Allah, you will attain to the utmost proximity to Him, the gift of love shall be upon you, and then all your movements and times of stillness will become for and by Him. Then experience the bestowal of sainthood or even vice-regency [*khilafa*]. And this is what the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, referred to when he said, Allah, the Exalted says,

وَمَا تَقَرَّبَ إِلَيَّ عَبْدِي بِشَيْءٍ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا افْتَرَضْتُ عَلَيْهِ، وَمَا يَزَالُ عَبْدِي يَتَقَرَّبُ إِلَيَّ بِالنَّوَافِلِ حَتَّى أُحِبَّهُ، فَإِذَا أَحْبَبْتُهُ كُنْتُ سَمْعَهُ الَّذِي يَسْمَعُ بِهِ، وَبَصَرَهُ الَّذِي يُبْصِرُ بِهِ، وَيَدَهُ الَّتِي يَبْطِشُ بِهَا، وَرِجْلَهُ الَّتِي يَمْشِي بِهَا، وَلَئِنْ سَأَلَنِي لَأُعْطِيَنَّهُ وَإِنْ اسْتَعَاذَنِي لَأُعِيذَنَّهُ، وَمَا تَرَدَّدْتُ فِي شَيْءٍ أَنَا فَاعِلُهُ تَرَدُّدِي فِي قَبْضِ نَفْسِ عَبْدِي الْمُؤْمِنِ يَكْرَهُ الْمَوْتَ وَأَنَا أَكْرَهُ مَسَاءَتَهُ وَلَا بُدَّ لَهُ مِنْهُ.

“My servant draws nearer to Me with nothing more pleasing than what I have made obligatory upon him. And then he continues to draw nearer to Me with supererogatory devotions until I love him. And when I love him, I become his hearing with which he hears, his sight with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his foot with which he walks, so that by Me he hears, by Me he sees, by Me he strikes, and by Me, he walks. Should he ask Me, I shall surely grant

him his request; should he ask Me for protection, I shall surely protect him. Never do I hesitate in anything as I hesitate in taking the soul of my believing servant; he dislikes death, and I dislike displeasing him, but it is a thing inevitable.”

See, and you should realise, may Allah have mercy on you, what this Holy Tradition [*Hadith Qudsi*] contains secrets and gnosis, and ponder on the subtle meanings and subtleties which it indicates. When Allah likes everything he likes, and he dislikes everything he dislikes by Allah, only then fortunate servant reaches that high rank. His conforming to what Allah has made obligatory upon him, and his performing supererogatory devotions in abundance in his wish to draw nearer to Allah. So make haste! Make haste, if you are determined to reach the degrees of perfection and wish to attain to the ranks of men who have realised the virtues. The path is now manifest before you, and the radiance of realisation has appeared to you.

You should know that Allah has through His favour, grace and mercy make supererogatory [*nawafil*] devotions benefits, for the many imperfections that occur in obligatory [*fardu*] worship. However, a flaw in an obligatory act is only redeemed by an act of supererogation of the same kind: prayer by prayer and fasting by fasting. Obligations are the basis and actions of supererogation are dependent upon them.

The one who performs the obligations avoids the prohibited things, and does not add anything to this is better than him who conducts acts of supererogation but neglects some obligatory deeds. You should, therefore, beware of neglecting any duties while occupied with deeds of supererogation, for you would thereby sin, and by abandoning your obligatory duties, your supererogatory acts will become unacceptable to Allah. An example of this is the man who occupies himself with acquiring a kind of knowledge which is, for him, supererogatory and neglects to acquire the type which is, for him, obligatory, either outwardly or inwardly. Another is the man who can but neglects to work for a livelihood and busies himself with supererogatory devotions, leaving his children to beg from others. You can use these two examples to assess by analogy other similar situations.

You should know that you will never attain to the performing of obligations, the avoiding of the prohibited things, and the performance of the supererogatory acts that He has laid down for you to draw nearer to Him, save through knowledge. Seek it then! For he, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ.

“Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim.”

Knowledge makes you aware of what is a duty, what are the recommended actions, what is forbidden, how to perform your obligations and recommended acts, and how to avoid what is prohibited. Therefore, you must know and cannot dispense with it; for on the practice of it, your happiness in this world and the hereafter depends. Know that those who worship but have no knowledge end up receiving more harm from their worship than benefit. How many a worshipper has tired himself out in worshipping while persistently committing a sin which he believed to be an act of obedience or at any rate, not a sin! The gnostic Shaykh Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi, in the chapter on advice in the book the Meccan Opening [*Al Futuhat Al Makkia*], relates the story of a Moroccan who showed great zeal in worship, and one day bought a female donkey which he never ostensibly used for any purpose. A man questioned him about why he kept the animal, and he replied, “I keep it to protect my genitals from adultery.” He did not know that it was prohibited to have intercourse with animals! When he was informed about this, he was frightened and wept profusely.

The knowledge obligatory upon every Muslim is to know the mandatory status of those things which Allah has made obligatory upon him, and the forbidden status of those which Allah has prohibited him. As for understanding the way to perform each obligation, this becomes obligatory only at the time of wanting to achieve it. The one who reaches puberty or enters Islam in the month of Muharram, for instance, must immediately learn the meaning of the two Affirmations [*syahada*], and utter them; and then learn about the duty of performing the five prayers and their necessary components and rules. He must then learn about the obligations of fasting, the Obligatory Charity Tax

[*zakat*], the pilgrimage [*hajj*], and so forth, and about the prohibition of adultery, wine-drinking, the wrongful appropriation of other people's wealth, and the other things forbidden by the Law. He does not need to learn precisely how to fast or perform the *Hajj* until Ramadan or *Hajj* time arrives, nor how to calculate the *zakat* until he has enough money for the *zakat* to become due and its time comes. And Allah knows best.

The primary duties and prohibitions are well known among Muslims; the important thing, however, is to understand the various rules, which can only be acquired from a scholar who fears Allah and upholds the truth. The ordinary people are sometimes right and sometimes mistaken, so beware of doing what they do and leaving what they leave by emulation, for emulation can be sound only if it be of a scholar who practices that which he knows, and such people are today a rarity. Therefore, if you see a scholar these days and observe him doing or leaving something, and you do not know whether this is right or wrong, do not be content with just having seen what he does or refrains from doing; ask him about the legal reasons and the religious rules behind it.

A Muslim does not need a long time to acquire the knowledge that is obligatory for him, nor is much hardship involved. An intelligent student will find it sufficient to sit with a proficient scholar for an hour or two. A Bedouin once came to the Messenger of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him, while he was preaching from his pulpit, and asked him to teach him some of that which Allah had taught him. He descended from his pulpit, taught him, then returned to it and completed his sermon.

On the whole, those who want security and gain must not initiate any action or continue in something already started until they know Allah's ruling in its regard: whether it is obligatory [*fardu*], recommended [*mandub*], just licit [*mubah*], or prohibited [*haram*]¹.

¹ In Islamic Law things are classified as permitted [*halal*] or prohibited [*haram*]. The permissible can be further subdivided into obligatory [*fardu*], recommended [*mandub*], just licit [*mubah*] and distasteful or discouraged [*makruh*].

Indeed, everything will fall into one of those four groups. Admittedly, this must be a duty for every Muslim.

Believers can be divided into the ordinary folks and the elect. The former may fall into the neglect of duties and the committing of forbidden things; they are not keen on supererogatory devotions, and they use matters classified as the merely licit [*mubah*] issues to excess. The best among them are those who hasten to repent and ask for forgiveness. As for the elect, they carry out their obligations and avoid prohibitions under all circumstances; they are also careful to perform the recommended things and confine themselves when using what is licit to that which is a means of conforming to Allah's orders and prohibitions.

وَبِاللّٰهِ التَّوْفِيقُ.

And Allah is the One Who grants success.

Chapter Thirteen

Cleanliness

It is incumbent upon you to take care of your outward [*dzahir*] and inward [*batin*] cleanliness, for the immaculate one becomes inwardly and, in his spirit, a spiritual angel, although in his body and outward form he remains a physical human being. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings be upon him and his family and peace, said,

بُنِيَ الدِّينُ عَلَى النَّظَافَةِ.

“Religion is built upon pure and cleanliness.”

And upon him be blessings and peace said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ نَظِيفٌ يُحِبُّ النَّظَافَةَ.

“Allah is pure and clean, and He likes cleanliness.”

Inward cleanliness is achieved by purifying the soul from vile traits of character such as pride, ostentation, envy, love of the world, and other similar things, and by adorning it with noble qualities of nature such as humility, modesty, sincerity, generosity, and so forth.

The Imam al-Ghazali recorded the true nature of these and the way to rid oneself of vile traits and acquire noble ones in the second half of the *Ihya'*. You should know this and make use of it!

As for outward cleanliness, this depends on avoiding transgressions and keeping to obedience.

The one who adorns his outward with perseverance in good works, and his inward with taking on praiseworthy attributes, has completed his cleanliness. Otherwise, he would only have a share of it proportionate to his remoteness from reprehensible traits and acts, and nearness to good ones.

Among the divisions of outward cleanliness are those things indicated in the Law such as removing excessive hair and nails for instance and dirt, and purification from acts which necessitate the ritual ablution and impurities.

Amongst these are the removal of pubic hair, depilation or shaving of the armpits, dipping the moustache and the paring of the fingernails. Start with the right index finger carry on to the right little finger, then to the left little finger through to the left thumb and end with the right thumb is recommended. As for the feet, one begins with the right little toe and ends with the left little toe, in the same order as washing the toes during the ritual ablution [*wudu*']. It is reprehensible to delay all these things for more than forty days.

Other such things are the removal with water of the soil which accumulates in wrinkles, the mucus in the eyes, the dirt in the nostrils, and the use of a toothpick to remove the remains of food from between the teeth.

It is incumbent upon you to clean your mouth with the teeth cleaning twig [*siwak*], and it is better if this is of arak wood. This action is strongly recommended before initiating any act of worship. You must also clean your clothes with water whenever they become dirty, in moderation and without imitating those who live in luxury.

Other prophetic acts [*sunnah*] related to cleanliness are the oiling and combing of the beard, cleaning all the hair, using kohl three times in each eye (for he used kohl, may peace be upon him, in this manner every night), using perfume abundantly, for it masks unpleasant odours, whether human or other; this is firmly recommended for the Friday prayer and other gatherings of Muslims. The Messenger of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him, liked it and used it abundantly; sometimes the shine of perfume would be

seen on the parting of his hair: this he did so that people would imitate him, for his body was naturally fragrant; he was in no need of perfume, and they used to fragrance themselves by collecting his sweat. It is suitable for men to use perfume, which has a strong scent but no colour and for women to do the opposite.

It is incumbent upon you to be aware of all impure substances: if soil by any of them which is damp wash it out as soon as possible. If you become impure due to sexual intercourse [*junub*] perform the greater ablution [*ghusl*] immediately, for the person in *junub* is forbidden from the Presence of Allah, which is why he is not permitted to stay in the mosque or recite the Quran.

It is narrated on authority that the angels do not enter a house where there is a person in *junub*, and when the angels go, the devils come from every direction.

You should beware of eating or sleeping while you are in *junub*, for you would thus expose yourself to many problems; if you cannot take an immediate *ghusl*, then the least you can do is to wash your private parts and perform the *wudu*'.

You should renew your ritual ablution [*wudu*'] before each obligatory prayer and strive always to remain in a state of ritual purity. Renew your *wudu*' whenever you break it, for *wudu*' is the weapon of the believer, and when the weapon is in evidence, the enemy dares not approach. A man once came to Shaykh Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili and asked him to teach him alchemy. The Shaykh promised to teach him, but only after he had stayed with him for a year and on condition that each time he broke his *wudu*', he renewed it and prayed two prostrations [*raka'ats*]. At the end of the year, the man went to draw water from a well, and the bucket came up full of gold and silver; he poured it back into the well for he had no desire for them whatsoever. Then he went to the Shaykh and told him. The Shaykh replied, "You have now become all alchemy," and he made him a summoner to Allah [*dai illah*].

Pray two *rakaats* each time after you perform *wudu*. If you cannot remain continuously ritually pure, try always to be so when

sitting in the mosque, reciting the Qur'an, acquiring knowledge, and sitting for dhikr, as well as during all other devotions.

When you make *wudu'* or *ghusl* beware of confining yourself to what is obligatory. You should take care to perform all the relevant *Sunnah* and proprieties, in the manner that has been report to us regarding his *ghusl* and *wudu*, may peace be upon him.

You should perform *ghusl* now and then to maintain cleanliness, even if you are not *junub*. A *ghusl* on Friday is recommended in the prophetic practice [*Sunnah*] for those who attend the Friday prayer, and you should perform this, which should suffice for cleanliness, but under some circumstances and for some people.

When you finish your ablution *wudu* or *ghusl* invoke,
أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.

“I testify that there is no divinity but Allah alone, He has no partners, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.”¹

¹ The recommended full invocation,

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي مِنَ التَّوَّابِينَ وَاجْعَلْنِي مِنَ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ وَاجْعَلْنِي مِنْ عِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِينَ، سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ، أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، أَسْتَغْفِرُكَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْكَ. وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ.

“I witness that there is no God but Allah , Alone and no partner has He. And I witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger. O Allah , make us among those who repent, and make us among those who are virtuous, make us among those who worship You righteously. Sanctified are you, O Allah, and Praise to You. And I witness that there is no God but You, and I seek forgiveness from You and my repentance towards You. And Allah's be blessing on our Master Mohammed, his families, his companions and grant them peace. All praises and thanks to the Lord of the Universe.

Chapter Fourteen

Following the *Sunnah* Prophetic Practices

Adhere to the good manners of the *Sunnah* outwardly [*dzahir*] and inwardly [*batin*]; make them routine to you, and you will have perfected your following and emulation of the Messenger of Mercy, the Prophet of Guidance.

If it would be pleasing to you to become one of the True Saints [*siddiqun*], then do not habituate yourself to any behaviour until you study it and ascertain whether he, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, any of his Companions or any of the leaders thus behaved. If you find that they did not, while able to, then refrain, even if it be something licit, for they refrained from it only because of their knowledge that to do so was better. If you find that they did it, find out how they did it, and then follow suit. A particular scholar who refrained from eating watermelons explained his behaviour by saying that he came to know that the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, had eaten them, but not how the Prophet had done so, and this was why he abstained from them.

We have mentioned previously, and will again describe, later on, Allah willing, some of the good manners observe during devotional activities. In this chapter, we will mention some of the right behaviours and practice during everyday activities.

You should know that Allah preserved the person who observes the Prophetic good manners in his everyday activities is from trespassing into the base attributes and behaviour that are outside them and obtains the spiritual and worldly benefits that Allah has set, through His wisdom, within them. Anyone who would be pleased to become completely free and clean of impurities and human passions should make all his outward and inward motions and times of stillness conform to the Law and follow the dictates of both Law and reason. When the Sufis denounce certain everyday activities, their purpose is how these done in excess under the influence of cravings and passions, and with neglect of the good manners established by the Law.

The Proof of Islam said in ‘The Forty Foundations’ [*Al-Arba'in Al-Asl*] after providing an encouragement to follow the Prophet, and pointing out particular of the secrets of this, “All this applies to everyday activities. As for acts of worship, I know of no cause for leaving the *Sunnah* other than that is a concealed disbelief or manifest foolishness.” You should understand this!

You should know that you must begin everything you do with the Name of Allah [*Basmallah*]; if you forget to say at the beginning when you remember to say,

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ فِي أَوَّلِهِ وَآخِرِهِ.

“In the Name of Allah at the beginning and its end.”

Try never to do anything routine without first forming a good intention. When you put on your clothes intend [*niat*] to cover the parts that Allah has ordered you to cover. Put on the right sleeve of shirts and similar garments first and take it off last. Do not allow the cloth you wrap around the lower half of your body or your shirt to go further down than the middle of your shin; if you will do this then no lower than the ankle. Women are allowed to let their dresses down to the ground on all sides but not to let them trail more than two-thirds of a forearm’s length. Shorten the sleeves of your shirt to the wrist or the fingertips, and if you make it go beyond, then do not be excessive. The sleeve of the Messenger of Allah’s shirt, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, was down to his wrist, and Ali shortened the sleeve of one of his shirts so that it did not go beyond his fingertips. Acquire

only such clothes as you need to wear; do not seek to acquire the most luxurious or the *coarsest* of clothes but adhere to moderation. Do not expose the areas that you must cover or any part of them except when necessary. When it becomes necessary to do so say before proceeding,

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ

In the Name of Allah, Who is the only deity.

When you put on your clothes say,

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي كَسَانِي هَذَا، وَرَزَقَنِيهِ مِنْ غَيْرِ حَوْلٍ مِنِّي، وَلَا قُوَّةَ.

“Praised and thanked be Allah, Who clothed me in this garment and granted it to me without any ability or power on my part.”

It is a prophetic practice [*Sunnah*] to wear a turban and not to make one's sleeves too big or the turban too large. You must utter only words of goodness. Everything that it is forbidden to say is not permitted to listen. When you speak do so clearly and methodically, listen to what is being said to you, and do not interrupt anyone except when what is being said is detestable to Allah: backbiting for instance. Beware of speaking in a disorganised manner. If someone says something to you that you already know, do not make him aware that you know it, for this results in your companion feeling estranged. If someone relates a story or anything else to you inaccurately do not say to him, “It is not as you say, it is like this and this.” If it is concerned with religion to make him aware of the correct version, but gently.

You should beware of delving into that which does not concern you or of swearing by Allah too frequently. Do not swear by Him, Transcendent and Exalted is He, except truthfully and when necessary.

You should beware of all kinds of lying, for this is incompatible with faith. Also beware of backbiting and slander, and excessive humour. Avoid all other types of ugly talk, refrain from poor just as you refrain from blameworthy speech. Think about what you say before you say it; if it is good, then go ahead, if not keep silent.

He, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

كُلُّ كَلَامِ ابْنِ آدَمَ عَلَيْهِ، لَا لَهُ، إِلَّا ذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَوْ أَمْرًا بِمَعْرُوفٍ، أَوْ نَهْيًا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ.

“Everything that the son of Adam says is against him, not for him, except if it is a remembrance of Allah or enjoining good or forbidding evil.”

He, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

رَحِمَ اللَّهُ أَمْرًا قَالَ خَيْرًا فَعَنِمَ، أَوْ سَكَتَ عَنْ شَرٍّ فَسَلِمَ.

“Allah has mercy on a man who said words of goodness and thus gained or refrained from saying evil and thus was safe.”

He, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَتَكَلَّمُ بِالْكَلِمَةِ، مَا يُلْقِي لَهَا بَالًا، يَهْوِي بِهَا أَبْعَدَ مِنَ الثَّرِيَّا.

“A man may utter a word thinking it insignificant, and it leads him to plummet farther beyond the unknown.”

It is incumbent upon you to walk to something useful or necessary, and when you do, do not be in too much haste. Do not walk with conceit or vanity, whereby you would drop in Allah’s estimation. Do not get annoyed if someone walks before you and do not enjoy it when people are on your heels and walk behind you, for such are the attributes of the arrogant. Do not turn around excessively as you walk and do not turn around just out of curiosity. He, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, walk briskly, as if going downhill, and when called, to stop but not turn around.

You must be aware that when you sit, take care to keep your private parts covered, face the Qibla, have reverence and gravity, and refrain from fidgeting, restlessness, and repeatedly getting up.

Beware of excessively scratching, stretching yourself, belching, and yawning in people’s faces. If yawning overpowers you put your left hand before your mouth.

Beware of laughing too often, which kills the heart, and if you can convert your laughter into a smile, then do so. Do not rise from your seat before saying,

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ أَسْتَغْفِرُكَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْكَ.

“Transcendent are You, O Lord, and praised by Your praises; I bear witness that there is no god but You, I seek Your forgiveness and repent unto You.”

For it has been given in a prophetic narration that whoever recites to say so is forgiven anything he may have done while sitting.

When you want to sleep, you should lay down on your right side, facing the Qibla, repent of all your sins and intend to observe the Night Vigil for worship, then recites to say,

بِاسْمِكَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبِّي، وَصَعْتُ جَنْبِي، وَبِاسْمِكَ أَرْفَعُهُ، فَاعْفِرْ لِي ذَنْبِي، اللَّهُمَّ فِينِي عَذَابَكَ
يَوْمَ تَجْمَعُ عِبَادَكَ. (ثلاثاً)

“With Your Name, O Lord, My Lord, do I rest my side, and with Your Name do I raise it, so forgive me my sin. O Lord, protect me from Your chastisement on the day when You gather Your servants.” (3)

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ. (ثلاثاً)

“I seek Allah’s forgiveness, the Mighty with Whom there is no deity; the Living, the Sustainer; and I repent unto Him.” (3)

Then recite,

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ (ثلاثاً وثلاثين)، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ (ثلاثاً وثلاثين) و اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ (أربعاً وثلاثين).

Transcendent is Allah (33), All Praises and Thanks belongs to Allah (33), and Allah is Great (34).

There are other invocations to be recited before sleep, which you should not neglect.

Sleep only in a state of ritual purity and go to sleep, remembering Allah. Do not get used to comfortable beds, for they lead to too much sleep and neglect of night vigils; you would then feel great sorrow and regret when you see that which Allah has prepared for those who wake up at night. Indeed he, may blessings and peace be upon him said,

يُخَشِّرُ النَّاسَ فِي صَعِيدٍ وَاحِدٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، فَيُنَادِي مُنَادٍ، أَيْنَ الَّذِينَ كَانَتْ تَتَجَافَى
جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ، فَيَقُومُونَ وَهُمْ قَلِيلٌ فَيَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ.

“People will be assembled on one plain the Day of Resurrection, and a herald will call, “Where are those who forsake their beds of sleep (or shunned their resting places)?¹ and only a few will rise and enter the Garden without reckoning.”²

And he, may blessings and peace be upon him said,
قَالَتْ أُمُّ سُلَيْمَانَ بْنِ دَاوُدَ عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ لَهُ، "يَا بُنَيَّ! لَا تُكْثِرِ النَّوْمَ بِاللَّيْلِ، فَإِنَّ
كَثْرَةَ النَّوْمِ بِاللَّيْلِ يَأْتِي فَقِيرًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ".

“The mother of Solomon son of David, may peace be upon them, said:
"O my son, do not sleep much at night, for the one who sleeps at night shall come as a pauper on the Day of Rising!"

The Imam al-Ghazali, may Allah’s mercy be upon him, said,
“You should know that night and day are twenty-four hours. Do not sleep more than eight, for it should suffice, were you to live sixty years, to have wasted twenty, being one third.”

If under some circumstances you find yourself unable to sleep on your right side and also face the Qibla, then lay down on your right side and try not to set your back to the Qibla. If you lie down to rest but not to sleep, there is no harm in lying on your left side.

A midday nap or siesta [*Qailulail*] helps you to rise at night, and you should, therefore, take one.

You should beware of sleeping either after the morning prayer [*Fajr*], for this stops provision [from reaching you], or after the afternoon [*Asar*] prayer, for this results in insanity, or yet before the night [*Isha*] prayer, for this conduces to insomnia.

If you see in a dream something that pleases you, thank Allah, interpret it in an appropriate and goodly way, and thus it will be fulfilled. When you see something that disturbs you, ask Allah for His protection from evil, spit three times to your left, turn over to your other side, and speak about it to no-one, for it will not harm you.

¹ Surah 32 Al Sajdah Verse 16.

² Surah 40 Al Ghafir Verse 40.

When someone relates a dream to you, do not interpret it until either he asks you to or you ask him for his permission.

When you either eat or drink, always begin by reciting, “In the Name of Allah” [*Bismillah*] (بِسْمِ اللَّهِ) and conclude with, “Praised belongs to Allah” [*Alhamdulillah*] [الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ]. Eat and drink using your right hand. When you are offer food, say,

اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ لَنَا فِيْمَا رَزَقْتَنَا وَأَطْعِمْنَا خَيْرًا مِنْهُ.

“O Allah, bless what You have given us, and give us to eat that which is yet better.”

If it is milk, however, you should say and add,
“and give us more of it.”

وَزِدْنَا مِنْهُ

for there is nothing that has been handed down better than milk.

It is incumbent upon you to wash your hands before and after eating, eat a small portion, chew thoroughly, and do not extend your hand to more food before you have swallowed what is already in your mouth. Eat from near the sides of the plate and not from the middle, for the middle is where the blessings [*baraka*] descends. If you drop some of the food, clean and then eat it, and do not leave it for the Devil. Lick your fingers and clean the bowl after you have finished. Use your index, middle finger, and thumb in eating; you can use the remaining fingers whenever you need to, for instance, when eating rice.

When you eat with others, partake of what is immediately before you, except when eating fruit. Do not keep looking at the other people who are eating; make appropriate conversation, and do not speak with food in your mouth. If you find it necessary to spit or blow your nose, turn your head away from them or go somewhere else where you can do it.

Whenever you eat at someone’s house, praise them and pray for their felicity.

When you have finished eating say,

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، اَللّٰهُمَّ اَطْعَمْنِيْ طَيِّبًا فَاسْتَغْمِلْنِيْ صَالِحًا. اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِيْ اَطْعَمَنِيْ هَذَا
الطَّعَامَ وَرَزَقَنِيْهِ مِنْ غَيْرِ حَوْلٍ مِنِّيْ وَلَا قُوَّةٍ.

“Praised and thanks belong to Allah! O Lord, You have fed me on goodness, therefore use me in goodness. Praised and thanks belong to Allah, Who fed me with neither ability nor power on my part.”

The one who says this will have his sins forgiven.

Do not be obliged to use a sauce with every kind of food and never criticise food; however, awful it is. Do not make delicious and pleasurable food your prime concern otherwise; you will be one of those about whom the Messenger of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

شَرَارُ أُمَّتِي الَّذِينَ غَدُّوا بِاللَّعِيمِ، وَنَبَتَتْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْسَادُهُمْ، وَإِنَّمَا هِمَّتْهُمْ أَلْوَانُ الطَّعَامِ،
وَأَلْوَانُ الثِّيَابِ، وَيَتَشَدَّقُونَ فِي الْكَلَامِ.

“The worst people in my nation are those who indulge in lavish food and their bodies grow on it. Their concern lies only in the different kinds of food and clothing, and they speak pretentiously.”

Ali may Allah honour him said, “The one whose main concern is what enters his belly is as valuable as that which comes out of it.”

So, you should strive to allow only licit [*halal*] food to enter your stomach, for the heart of the one who eats *halal* food for forty days becomes illuminated and the wellsprings of wisdom flow from his tongue, Allah honour him with renunciation of the world, his inward becomes apparent, and his behaviour towards his Lord excellent. The one who eats suspect and prohibited things become the opposite of all this.

It is incumbent upon you to beware of eating excessively and frequently eating to satiety, for even if it be from *halal* foods, it will still be the beginning of many evils. It results in hardening of the heart, loss of insight, confused thinking, laziness in worship, and other things.

The way to be moderate is to stop eating while still desiring to eat and not to start eating until you want food.

The sign that you need to have food or the real desire is when you want any food.

When you drink water, to sip it, and do not pour it down. Stop to breathe three times while drinking; do not breathe into the cup, neither drink where the glass or cup is cracked, nor standing up, nor from the mouth of a water skin or container. If you find no container drink from your hand. After you have finished then recite,

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي جَعَلَهُ عَذْبًا فُرَاتًا بَرَحْمَتِهِ، وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْهُ مِلْحًا أَجَاجًا يَذُوبِنَا.

“All Praise and Thanks belong to Allah! Who made it sweet and limpid through His mercy, and not salty and bitter through our sins.

When you approach your wife sexually say”,

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ، اللَّهُمَّ جَنِّبْنَا الشَّيْطَانَ وَجَنِّبِ الشَّيْطَانَ مَا رَزَقْتَنَا.

“In the Name of Allah, O Lord, keep Satan away from us and from that [offspring] that You give us!”

Keep yourself, and your wife cover and behave quietly and serenely.

When you feel near to your orgasm recite this verse within yourself, without moving your tongue,

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ مِنَ الْمَاءِ بَشَرًا فَجَعَلَهُ نَسَبًا وَصِهْرًا وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ قَدِيرًا.

“It is He Who has created man from water: then has He established relationships of lineage and marriage: for Your Lord has power over all things.”¹

Regarding whether to marry or not, the best choice for a worshipper is that which is safer from the religious point of view, better for his heart, and more conducive to collected thinking. It is exceptionally objectionable for those who are not married to think about women in a manner which increases their desire for them. Anyone thus afflicted, and unable to control it with acts of worship

¹ Surah 25 Al Furqaan Verse 54

must get married. If he is unable to, let him fast, for this diminishes desire.

When you go to the lavatory for either of the excretory functions, wear your sandals, put something on your head, put your left foot forward as you enter and exit with your right foot. When entering say,

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْحُبْثِ وَالْحَبَائِثِ.

“In the Name of Allah, O Lord, I seek Your protection from male and female demons.”

And as you come out say,

عُفْرَانِكَ، الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنِّي الْأَذَى وَعَافَانِي.

“I seek Your forgiveness! All Praises and Thanks belong to Allah, Who removed harm from me and made me healthy.”

Do not invoke Allah inside the lavatory except in your heart.

Do not take in with you anything on which His Exalted Name is written, out of reverence for Him. Do not act frivolously and speak only when necessary. Raise your clothes only to the extent of protecting them from getting soiled. Keep well away from anybody’s sight and let neither your sound nor smell is noticed. Neither face the Qibla nor turn your back to it. Such action may be awkward in some buildings when it is allowed because of the hardship that would result. Do not urinate in stagnant water, even if there is a large quantity of it, except when this is unavoidable or on the solid ground nor against the wind. The situation is for your protection against getting soiled with urine, which leads to most of the grave’s torment. So, clean yourself from it thoroughly but without reaching the stage of obsessiveness or compulsive. Cleaning is assisted by coughing and emptying the penis by gently massaging the below surface of the penis. Clean your anal region with stones (or similar material like toilet paper) then water, if only one of them is to be used then water is better. Begin with the front (the private part) when using water and the anal region when using stones. After cleansing invoke,

اللَّهُمَّ حَصِّنْ فَرْجِي مِنَ الْفَوَاحِشِ وَطَهِّرْ قَلْبِي مِنَ النِّفَاقِ.

“O Lord! Guard my sexual organs against depravity and purify my heart from hypocrisy!”

Use your right hand in everything except in removing contamination and dirt, (always put your right foot forward except in) entering dirty places, where you should begin with the left. When you sneeze, lower your voice, cover your mouth, and say,

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ.

“All Praises and Thanks belong to Allah, the Lord of the Universes.”

Spit only to your left or near to your left foot.

It is incumbent upon you to close the water skin's mouth, cover all vessels, and shut the house's door, especially before going to sleep or going out. Do not go to sleep until you have put out or covered all flames in the home such as lamps, and so forth. If you find a vessel uncovered in the morning or a water-skin open, do not drink water from them but only use it for things which defiled water can be used, regardless of it being clean, for using it is dangerous. Shaykh ibn 'Arabi said, in the *Futuhat* that in every year there is an unknown night in which sicknesses descend, which find no uncovered vessel nor open water skin but that they enter therein. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings be upon him and his family and peace advised people to close their water skins and cover their vessels. If you find nothing to cover a vessel with put a twig on it, then invoke Allah's name and say,

فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ

“Then put your trust in Allah.”

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ.

“For Allah loves those who put their trust in Him.”¹

¹ Surah 3 Ala Imran Verse 159.

Chapter Fifteen

Conduct in Mosques

You must stay for prolonged periods in the mosque to perform worship to Allah [*i'tikaf*], for mosques are the houses of Allah and the places most beloved to Him. He, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,
المَسْجِدَ بَيْتٌ كُلُّ تَقِيٍّ.

“The mosque is the house of all those who have *taqwa*.”

He, may blessings and peace be upon him, also said,

إِذَا رَأَيْتُمُ الرَّجُلَ يَتَعَاهَدُ الْمَسْجِدَ فَاشْهَدُوا لَهُ بِالْإِيمَانِ.

“When you see a man become accustomed to being in the mosques, bear witness that he has faith.”

Allah the Exalted says,

إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ.

“Allah’s mosques shall be visited and maintained by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day.”¹

And the Prophet, may peace be upon him, included among the seven people whom Allah will shade under His Throne on the day when no shade shall exist except Allah, a man whose heart remained attached to the mosque from the moment he left it until his return.

¹ Surah 9 At Tawbah Verse 18.

You must, when sitting in a mosque, have good manners and respect, and refrain from unnecessary, not to mention prohibited talk. If you feel like talking about something worldly go out of the mosque. Occupy yourself in it exclusively with worship, for it was built only for the worship of Allah. He, Exalted is He, says,

فِي بُيُوتٍ أَذِنَ اللَّهُ أَنْ تُرْفَعَ وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ. رِجَالٌ لَا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ يَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ الْقُلُوبُ وَالْأَبْصَارُ. لِيَجْزِيَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوا وَيَزِيدَهُمْ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَاللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ.

“Lit is such a Light in houses, which Allah has permitted to be raised to honour; for in them is His Name celebrated. In them is He is glorified in the mornings and the evenings, again and again, by men whom neither traffic nor merchandise can divert from the Remembrance of Allah nor regular Prayer, nor the practice of regular Charity. Their only fear is for the Day when hearts and eyes will be transformed into a world wholly new. That Allah may reward them according to the best of their deeds and add even more for them out of His Grace. For Allah, do provide for those whom He will, without measure.”¹

When you enter the mosque, do so with your right foot and say,
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَالسَّلَامِ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي ذُنُوبِي وَافْتَحْ لِي أَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ.
“In the Name of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah, forgive my sins and open the gates of Your mercy for me!”

Do not sit down before you pray two prostrations [*raka'ats*]. If for any reason you are unable to pray, say four times

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ.

“Transcendent is Allah [*Tasbih*], and All Praises be to Allah [*Tahmid*], there is no god except Allah [*Tahlil*], and Allah is Great [*Takbir*].”

¹ Surah 24 An Nur Verse 36 to 38.

When you leave do so with your left foot and say what you did when you entered, only say,

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي ذُنُوبِي وَافْتَحْ لِي أَبْوَابَ فَضْلِكَ
أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ وَجُنُودِهِ.

“In the Name of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah, forgive my sins and open the gates of Your favour for me!” “I seek Allah’s protection against Satan, the repudiate and his army.”

When you hear the Call to Prayer [*azan*] repeat what the Caller [*Muezzin*] says until he calls,

حَيِّ عَلَى الصَّلَاةِ، وَ حَيِّ عَلَى الْفَلَاحِ،

“hasten to the prayer” and “hasten to success.”

Then you should say، لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ.

“There is neither ability nor strength except Allah.”

And for the dawn [*fajr*] prayer call, when he says,

“Prayer is better than sleep.” الصَّلَاةُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ النَّوْمِ.

Your response is,

“You are indeed truthful and loyal.” صَدَقْتَ وَبَرَرْتَ.

When the call for prayer [*azan*] is finished bless the Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, and then invoke,

اللَّهُمَّ رَبِّ هَذِهِ الدَّعْوَةُ التَّامَّةُ، وَالصَّلَاةُ الْقَائِمَةُ، آتِ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا الْوَسِيلَةَ وَالْفَضِيلَةَ،
وَابْعَثْهُ مَقَاماً مَحْمُوداً الَّذِي وَعَدْتَهُ.

“O our Lord, Lord of this complete call, and imminent prayer, give our Leader Muhammad the Intercession and superiority, and resurrect him to a praiseworthy rank, even as You have promised him.”

Invoke as many prayers as you can between the Call of Prayer [*azan*] and before the prayer [*Iqama*], since he, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

الدُّعَاءُ بَيْنَ الْأَذَانَيْنِ لَا يُرَدُّ.

“Prayers between the two Calls for Prayer [azan] are never refused.”

Among the prayers which have been a prophetic practice [*warid*] for this period is,

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَفْوَ وَالْعَافِيَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ.

“O Lord, I ask for your pardon and well-being in this life and hereafter.”

This prayer is recommended in the prophetic practices [*Sunnah*] for other times as well, so use it often for it is one of the best and most comprehensive of all prayers.

Chapter Sixteen

The Ritual Prayer

You must pray as soon as the time for each prayer comes, you should perform your ablutions and come to the mosque by the time of the Call [*azan*] for the obligatory prayers. When you do not, you should at least begin to get ready for the prayer immediately upon hearing the Call. He, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

فَضْلُ أَوَّلِ الْوَقْتِ عَلَى آخِرِهِ كَفَضْلِ الْآخِرَةِ عَلَى الدُّنْيَا.

“The superiority of the beginning of the time assigned to each prayer over its end is like the superiority of the Hereafter over this world.”

And he, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

أَوَّلُ الْوَقْتِ رِضْوَانِ اللَّهِ وَآخِرُهُ عَفْوَ اللَّهِ.

“At the beginning of the period is the Good Pleasure of Allah and at its end is His forgiveness.”

It is incumbent upon you to perform the regular prophetic supererogation [*sunnas*] as described in the Law, which is those before and after the obligatory [*fardhu*] prayers. Beware of missing any of them out of complacency, and if ever you do miss any with an excuse, then perform them as soon as possible.

It is incumbent upon you to have reverence and an attentive heart when you pray. Perfect your standing, intone the Qur'an and meditate on it, perfect your bowing, prostration, and all the other essential acts.

Be careful also to observe those prophetic practices [*sunnah*] and good manners which are indicated in the Law and avoid anything that may either impair the prayer or prevent it from being perfect. If you conform to this, your prayer will emerge white and glowing, and it will say, “May Allah safeguard you as you have safeguarded me!” Otherwise, it will come out black and dark, and will say, “May Allah ruin you as you have ruined me!”

He, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

لَيْسَ لِلْمَرْءِ مِنْ صَلَاتِهِ إِلَّا مَا عَقَلَ مِنْهَا.

“Only that of which the believer is conscious during his prayer is credited to him.”

Al-Hasan al-Basri, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “Every prayer in which the heart is not attentive is nearer to punishment than it is to reward.”

Satan, may Allah curse him, is intent on distracting the believer during his prayer, so that the moment he rises to pray he opens for him many doors into worldly affairs and reminds him of things which were not at all on his mind before. The repudiate Satan aims to distract him from concentrating on Allah and approaching Him, for if a person misses these, he will also miss Allah’s approach to him and may even come out of his prayer burdened with sins. For this reason, the scholars, may Allah have mercy on them, recommend that the one about to enter his prayer recite Surah 114 *An-Nas* (Mankind) as protection against Satan, the cursed.

It is also incumbent upon you not confine yourself to recite the same surah after the Opening Surah [*Surah Fateha*] at the designated times, except those according to the Prophetic Guidance as in Law, for instance, Surah 32 The Prostration [*Al-Sajda*] and Surah 76 Man [*Al-Insan*] for the dawn [*Fajr*] prays on Friday mornings.

You must also take care not to confine yourself to recite short chapters [*surah*] such as Surah 109 *Al-Kafirun* (Disbelievers), Surah 112 *Al-Ikhlās* (Sincere Devotion), Surah 113 *Al-Falaq* (The Daybreak) and Surah 114 *An-Nas* (Mankind).

If you lead the congregational prayer you should make it brief as is recommended in the narration of Mu'adh, may Allah be pleased with him, who once led a prayer and prolonged it so much that a man went to the Messenger of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him, and complained. Then he may blessings and peace be upon him said to him,

أَفْتَانُ أَنْتَ يَا مُعَاذُ! اقْرَأْ بِسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحَاهَا، وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَى.

“Are you a worker of sedition, O Mu'adh! Recite Surah 87 *al Alaa*, Surah 91 *Ash-Sham* (The Sun) and Surah 92 *Al Lail* (The Night).

Anyone who looks into the books of Hadith will recognise the correctness of what we have said. It was reported that the last prayer that the Messenger of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him led was a sunset [*magrib*] prayer in which he recited Surah 77 *Al Mursalaat* (The Wind which is sent).

وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى دَارِ السَّلَامِ

And Allah do call to the Home of Peace,

وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ.

He does guide whom He pleases to a straightway.

Chapter Seventeen

Prayer in Congregation

It is incumbent upon you that when you pray behind an imam, you must follow him properly, for the imam was appointed only so that he would lead people. Do not precede him in performing any of the prayer's action nor perform them simultaneously with him; you should instead follow him step by step. Once he, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

الَّذِي يُخْفَضُ وَيُرْفَعُ قَبْلَ الْإِمَامِ إِنَّمَا نَاصِيئُهُ بِيَدِ الشَّيْطَانِ.

“The forelock of the one who bows and rises before the imam is in the Devil's hand.”

It is incumbent upon you to reach the first row and compete for it without offending anyone. Beware of staying back when it is possible to advance, for the Prophet, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

لَا يَزَالُ قَوْمٌ يَتَأَخَّرُونَ (أَيَّ عَنِ الصَّفِّ الْأَوَّلِ) حَتَّى يُؤَخَّرَهُمُ اللَّهُ. (أَيَّ عَنْ فَضْلِهِ وَرَحْمَتِهِ).

“Some people will persist in staying back, (that is, from the first row) until Allah will hold them back.” (meaning until Allah hold His favours and mercy from them.)

And he, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى الصَّفِّ الْمُقَدَّمِ.

“Allah and His angels send blessings to the foremost row.”

And he, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, used to ask forgiveness for those in the first row thrice, and those in the second row once only.

It is incumbent upon you to assist in making the rows even and straight. If you are the imam, then this becomes doubly incumbent upon you. In the Law [*sharia*'], this is important, but most people are unaware of it. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, was very concerned with this matter, and used to do it himself and said,

لَتَسُوْنَ صُفُوْفُكُمْ أَوْ لِيُخَالِقَنَّ اللّٰهُ بَيْنَ قُلُوْبِكُمْ.

“You will straighten your rows or Allah will certainly cause disagreement to come between your hearts.”

He ordered them to close the gaps by saying:

وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ إِنِّي لَأَرَى الشَّيْطَانَ يَدْخُلُ فِي خَلَالِ الصَّفِّ كَأَنَّهُ الْحَذَفُ.

“By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, I see the Devil penetrating from gaps in the row. Just as a small lamb might do.”

It is incumbent upon you to perform the five prayers with a congregation and persevere in this. Indeed, the collective prayer is twenty-seven times better than an individual one, as is stated in a sound hadith. Beware of missing the mass prayer [*Jemaah*] for no good reason or an unacceptable one. If, when you arrive, you find that they have already finished praying, or if you stay at your house to safeguard your religion [*deen*], you must find someone to pray with so that you may obtain the reward for the collective prayer and escape the threats made in the prophetic narrations against those who abandon it. Just as he, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

لَيَنْتَهِيَنَّ أَقْوَامٌ عَنْ تَرْكِ الْجَمَاعَةِ أَوْ لِأَحْرَقَنَّ بُيُوتَهُمْ.

“Certain people must stop neglecting the congregation prayer, or else I shall burn their houses with them inside.”

And he, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

مَنْ سَمِعَ النَّدَاءَ فَارْغًا صَحِيحًا فَلَمْ يُجِبْ فَلَا صَلَاةَ لَهُ.

“For the one who hears the Call, is healthy and unoccupied, and does not answer it, there is no other acceptable prayer.”

And Ibn Mas’ud, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “We had seen a time when no one stayed back from the collective congregation prayer except hypocrites whose hypocrisy was well known.”

In the days of the Messenger of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him, they used to bring men who had to be supported between two men until they stood in the row. The people then regarded severely those who neglect the obligatory congregation [*fardhu ain*] prayers. So what about those who neglect the Friday prayers, the Messenger Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

مَنْ تَرَكَ ثَلَاثَ جُمُعٍ تَهَاوُنًا طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قَلْبِهِ.

“The heart of the man who neglects three Friday prayers because he holds the Friday Prayers in light estimation will be sealed by Allah.”

When you feel that you have an excuse not to attend the Friday or any other congregation prayer, imagine that in the place where there is prayer, a man will distribute money to all those present. If you then find the energy and the desire to go, then your excuse is unsound. Feel shame before Allah that worldly affairs are dearer to you than what He, Exalted is He, has in store for you.

You should know that an honest excuse will only prevent you from being called to account, while the reward can only be obtained by actually performing the deed. However, the award accorded to some who find it impossible to attend, like someone with continuous diarrhoea, or who is forcibly prevented from going. It can also be someone who, although not finding it altogether impossible to go would, by attending, cause undue hardship to another Muslim. An example of this is the one caring for a very sick person. People with such excuses, provided they feel sad and aggrieved at losing the prayer, will receive the reward. A perfect believer never abandons any act that would take him nearer to Allah, even though he may have a million excuses. He would only do so if he knew that not acting was more pleasing to Allah, and this is very rare. Thus, the perfect ones

among the people of Allah, in doing what takes them nearer to Him, endure that which firmly set mountains would be unable to carry. As for those whose faith and certainty are weak, and whose knowledge of Allah is inadequate, they are, when faced with having to miss an obligatory act, concerned only with avoiding reproach.

وَلِكُلِّ دَرَجَاتٍ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوا وَلِيُؤْفِقَهُمْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ.

“And to all are assigned degrees according to the deeds which they have done, and so that Allah may recompense their deeds, and no injustice be done to them.”¹

It is incumbent upon you to order all those whom you are responsible, whether child, wife or slave, with performing the obligatory prayers. When any of them refuses to do so, you should admonish and put fear into him. If the person rebels and persists in refusing, you may reprimand and physically chastise him; if he is then not rebuked and continues to refuse, then turn away and cease to have anything to do with him. For the one who abandons the prayer is a devil, remote from Allah’s mercy, exposed to His wrath and curses, and all Muslims are prohibited from befriending him and are obliged to oppose him. According to the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings be upon him and peace, this must be so, and he said,

الْعَهْدُ الَّذِي بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُمُ الصَّلَاةُ فَمَنْ تَرَكَهَا فَقَدْ أَشْرَكَ.

“The bond that is between them and us is broken by abandoning the prayer; thus, whoever abandons it has committed idolatry.”

And he, may Allah’s blessings be upon him and his family and peace, said,

لَا دِينَ لِمَنْ لَا صَلَاةَ لَهُ ، إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ الصَّلَاةِ مِنَ الدِّينِ كَمَثَلِ الرَّأْسِ مِنَ الْجَسَدِ.

“The one who does not pray has no religion. The prayer is to religion what the head is to the body.”

It is incumbent for you to free yourself every Friday from all worldly preoccupations and devote this noble day entirely to the hereafter. Occupy yourself with pure goodness and resolute movement

¹ Surah 46 Al-Ahqaf Verse 19.

toward Allah. Focus carefully for the hour in which Allah grant requests, which is a period in each Friday when a Muslim who asks Allah to give him any goodness or protect him from evil.

It is also incumbent upon you to be early to the Friday prayer; get there before the sun reaches its zenith, sit near the pulpit and listen carefully to the sermon; beware of distracting yourself with invocation or reflection, not to mention trivial talk or aimless thought. You must feel that all the warning and counselling that you hear is addressed to you personally.

Before you move your legs after the end of the prayer or talk to anyone, recite the Opening Surah *Fatiha*, Surah 112 Al-Ikhlās, Surah 113 Falaq and Surah 114 An-Nas seven times each, and say when you leave the prayer,

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ. (مائة مرة)

“Glory belongs to Allah, the Greatest and is free from imperfection and all praises and thanks belong to him.” (100 times)

For indeed there are hadiths which indicate the merit of this act.

وَبِاللَّهِ التَّوْفِيقُ!

Indeed, Success is by Allah!

Chapter Eighteen

*Zakat*¹

It is incumbent when you have money on which zakat is payable, to be aware of when it falls due, define its quantity, separate it from the rest, give it willingly, and intend it to be solely for the sake of Allah! If you do this, it will attract blessings [*baraka*], the good things in your possession will multiply, and your wealth will become well-guarded against all hazards.

You must separate *zakat* from your wealth and then distribute it. Do not be like certain worldly people who do not keep it separately and who give it away piecemeal to deserving people as they come along until the amount designated is all paid. Do not eat of your crops, when they amount to a minimum sum [*nisab*²] and when their quantity has become apparent until you know how much of its dry weight will be due.

If you want to eat from specific trees, then you should calculate *zakat* for only that which will be due towards them.

You should know that those who devise excuses to escape giving *zakat*, for instance by providing gifts, those who knowingly provide it to people who do not deserve it, and those who distribute it

¹ *Zakat* in the Arabic language means “that which purifies”, is a form of alms-giving treated in Islam as a religious obligation or tax, which, by Quranic ranking, is next after prayer in importance.

² *Nisab* is the minimum sum before zakat to be due.

according to their whims, as by giving it to someone whom they know will soon be useful to them, none of these men shall leave the world until Allah has punished them through their wealth,

كَذَلِكَ الْعَذَابُ وَلِالْعَذَابِ الْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ.

“Such is the Punishment (in this life); but greater is the Punishment in the Hereafter,- if only they knew!”¹

And if this is the state of those who do not give it strictly according to the Law, what must it be in the case of those who do not give it at all?

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ فَمَا رَبَحَتِ تِجَارَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ.

“They are those who have bartered Guidance for error: But their transactions are profitless, and they have lost true direction.”²

The withholder of zakat is as evil as the one who leaves the ritual prayer. Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, fought them and called them apostates [*murtaddun*].

It is incumbent upon you to give zakat *al-fitr* as you are required at the end of Ramadan, for yourself and on behalf of all those for whom you provide.

You must be liberal with charity, especially to needy relatives and people of virtue. Charity is better and brings more reward when given in this way.

It is incumbent upon you to give of that which you like best and which is dear to you so that you may attain to virtue. Allah, the Exalted says,

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّىٰ تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ.

“By no means shall you attain righteousness unless you give freely of that which you love.”³

Put others before yourself even in times of need, and you will become one of the successful. Keep your charity secret, for secret

¹ Surah 68 Al Qalam Verse 33.

² Surah 2 Al Baqara Verse 16.

³ Surah 3 Ala Imran Verse 92.

charity extinguishes the Lord's wrath, is seventy times better than a public charity, and is safe from the ostentation or showing off that ruins deeds. Never neglect to give something away every day, even if a small amount, and do this early, for hardships do not cross the protective barrier of charity.

Never disappoint a beggar who stands at your door; give him even as little as a date or less, for he is a gift from Allah to you. If you find nothing to offer, then send him away graciously with kind words and a promise. When you give a needy person something, smile at him and be aware that it is you who are indebted to him, for he accepts a little from you for which you receive a reward worth more than the whole world. A single morsel of food may bring a reward from Allah greater than Mount Uhud as was reported. Do not let the fear of poverty prevent you from giving charity, for it is the abandonment of charity which brings on poverty. Charity, on the contrary, attracts wealth. If the pursuer of the world gave much charity, it would return to him multiplied.

You should know that charity has immediate and long-term benefits: it immediately increases provision, lengthens life, protects from an evil death, gives bodily health, and puts blessings [*baraka*] into wealth. Later on, it will extinguish sins as water extinguishes the fire, shade the head of its giver on the Day of Rising, protect him from punishment, and many other things.

وَمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ إِلَّا مَنْ يُنِيبُ

“And there is no admonition except who turn (to Allah).”¹

¹ Surah 40 Ghafir Verse 13.

Chapter Nineteen

Ramadan & Fasting

It is incumbent upon you to increase your good works, especially in Ramadan, for the reward of a supererogatory act performed during it equals that of an obligatory act performed at any other time. Ramadan is also a time when it is easy to do good works. A person has much more energy for them than during any other month. Because the soul being lazy when it comes to good works, is then imprisoned by hunger and thirst, the devils, who hinder the soul, are shackled. The gates of the Fire are shut, the gates of the Garden are open, and the herald calls every night at Allah's command,

يَا بَاغِيَ الْخَيْرِ هَلُمَّ وَيَا بَاغِيَ الشَّرِّ أَفْصِرْ.

“O you who wish to do good, hasten! O you who wish for evil, halt!”

It is incumbent upon you to work only for the hereafter in this noble month and embark on something worldly only when necessary. Arrange your life before Ramadan in a manner which will render you free for divine worship when it arrives. Be intent on devotions and approach Allah more surely, especially during the last ten days. If you are able not to leave the mosque, except when strictly necessary, during those last ten days, then do so. Be careful to perform the Tarawih prayers during every Ramadan night. In some places, it is nowadays the custom to make them so short that sometimes some of the obligatory elements of the prayer are omitted, let alone the prophetic practices [*Sunnah*]. That our predecessors read the whole

Quran during this prayer is well known, reciting a section each night to complete it on one of the last nights of the month. If you can follow suit, then this is a significant gain; if you are not, then the least that you can do is to observe the essential elements of the prayer and its proprieties. Look out carefully for,

لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ.

“The Night of Destiny [*Laylat'ul-Qadr*], which is better than a thousand months.”¹

فِيهَا يُفْرَقُ كُلُّ أَمْرٍ حَكِيمٍ.

“It is the blessed night in which all affairs are wisely decided.”²

The one to whom it is unveiled sees the blazing lights, the open doors of heaven, and the angels ascending and descending, and may witness the whole of creation prostrating before Allah, the Exalted, its Creator. Most scholars think that it is in the last ten nights of Ramadan and is more likely to fall in the odd-numbered ones. A certain gnostic witnessed it on the night of the seventeenth, and this was also the opinion of al-Hasan al-Basri. Some scholars have said that it is the first night of Ramadan, and several great scholars have said that it is not fixed but shifts its position each Ramadan. They have said that the secret wisdom underlying this is that the believer should devote himself entirely to Allah, the Exalted, during every night of this month in the hope of coinciding with that night which has been kept obscure from him. And Allah knows best.

It is incumbent upon you to hasten to break your fast, as soon as you are sure that the sun has set. Delay pre-dawn meal [*sahur*] so long as you do not fear the break of dawn. Provide meals for those who fast at the time when they break-fast, even if with some dates or a glass of water, for the one who feeds another at the time of breaking the fast receives as much reward as he without this diminishing the other's reward in any way. Strive never to break your fast nor to feed anyone else at such a time except with lawful food.

¹ Surah 97 Al Qadr Verse 3.

² Surah 44 Ad Dukhan Verse 4.

It is incumbent upon you not eat much, take whatever lawful food is present, and do not prefer that which is tasty, for fasting is to subdue one's lustful appetite, and eating a large quantity of delicious food will, on the contrary, arouse and strengthen it.

It is incumbent for you to fast on the days on which the Law [*shara'*] encourages you to fast. Like the Day of Arafat for those who are not participating in the pilgrimage, the ninth and tenth day [*Ashura*] of *Muharram*, and the six days of *Shawwal* (after Ramadan) starting with the second day of the Feast [*Eidul Fitri*], for this is the more effective discipline for the soul.

It is incumbent to fast three days in each month, for these equal a perpetual fast. It is better if these are the White Days¹, for he, may blessings and peace be upon him, never omitted to fast them whether he was at home or travelling.

It is incumbent to fast often, especially in times of exceptional merit such as the Inviolable [*Haram*] Months², and noble days such as Mondays and Thursdays.

You should know that fasting is the pillar of discipline and the basis of striving. Fasting constitutes half of the endurance. The Messenger of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him and his family said,

كُلُّ عَمَلِ ابْنِ آدَمَ يُضَاعَفُ لَهُ، الْحَسَنَةُ عَشْرَ أَمْثَالِهَا إِلَى سَبْعِ مِائَةٍ ضِعْفٍ، قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: إِلَّا الصَّوْمَ، فَإِنَّهُ لِي وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ، يَدْعُ شَهْوَتَهُ وَطَعَامَهُ وَشَرَابَهُ مِنْ أَجْلِي، لِلصَّائِمِ فَرْحَتَانِ: فَرْحَةٌ عِنْدَ فِطْرِهِ، وَفَرْحَةٌ عِنْدَ لِقَاءِ رَبِّهِ.

“All good deeds of the son of Adam are multiplied ten to seven hundred-fold, Allah, the Exalted has said, “Except fasting, for it is Mine, and I shall reward a man for it, for he has left his appetite, his food and drink for My sake!” The one who fasts has two joys, one when breaking his fast, the other when meeting his Lord.”

¹ The nights of the full moon or 13th 14th and 15th.

² There are 4 Haram Months are Zulkaedah, Zulhijjah, Muharram and Rajab.

وَلَخُلُوفٌ فَمِ الصَّائِمِ أَطْيَبُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى مِنْ رِيحِ الْمِسْكِ.

And, “The odour of the fasting man’s mouth is more fragrant to Allah than that of musk.”

وَاللَّهُ يَقُولُ الْحَقَّ،

Indeed, Allah tells you the Truth,

وَهُوَ يَهْدِي السَّبِيلَ.

And He guides to the Right Way.

Chapter Twenty

Pilgrimage

It is incumbent upon you to hasten to perform the obligations of Pilgrimage [*Hajj*] and the Minor Pilgrimage [*Umra*] as soon as you are able. You should beware of postponing them while able for you may lose the ability or die while this duty is still incumbent, and you will then be deemed neglectful. He, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

مَنْ لَمْ تَحْبِسْهُ حَاجَةٌ ظَاهِرَةٌ، أَوْ مَرَضٌ حَاسِبٌ، أَوْ سُلْطَانٌ جَائِرٌ، وَمَاتَ وَلَمْ يَحْجْ،
فَلَيْمُتَ إِنْ شَاءَ يَهُودِيًّا، وَإِنْ شَاءَ نَصْرَانِيًّا.

“The one who is not hindered by obvious necessity, a disabling sickness or a tyrannical ruler, and who dies without having performed the Hajj, let him die a Jew if he so chooses or a Christian if he so chooses.”

It is incumbent upon you, whenever able, to perform Haj and 'Umra, just as you do any other supererogatory devotion. Allah, the Exalted is reported to say,

إِنَّ عَبْدًا قَدْ صَحَّحْتُ جِسْمَهُ وَأَكْثَرْتُ مَالَهُ تَأْتِي عَلَيْهِ خَمْسَةُ أَعْوَامٍ وَلَا يَعُدُّو عَلَيَّ
لَعَبْدٌ سَوْءٌ.

“Any servant whose body I have made healthy and whose wealth I have made abundant, and who lets five years go by without coming to Me, is an evil servant indeed.”

It is incumbent upon you to learn its necessary supererogatory acts [*sunnas*] and invocations when you decide to go on Hajj; You must also learn how to locate the Qibla, the concessions allowed during a journey and the associated proprieties, and the invocations to recite during it. Do not intend both Hajj and commerce at the same time. You should only take such worldly goods as you want to spend on the road. If you must trade, then avoid anything that may distract you from the correct performance of and the due respect for the rites ordained by Allah.

You must visit the Messenger of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him and his family, for visiting him after his death is like visiting him during his life. He, may blessings and peace be upon him and his family, is alive in his grave as are all the other Prophets. It is churlish to go to the House of Allah for Hajj and then neglect to visit Allah's Beloved for no overwhelming reason.

You should know that if you had arrived walking on your head from the farthest land of Islam to visit him, may blessings and peace be upon him and his family; you would not even have begun to render thanks for the guidance that Allah gave you through him.

It is incumbent upon you that when you wish to do something of consequence such as travelling or marrying, consult one of your brothers in whose knowledge and awareness you are confident. If the advice he gives you conforms to what you have in mind, then pray two supererogatory *rakaats*, with the intention, to make the right choice [*Istikhara*] and afterwards invoke the well-known prayer¹.

The Prophet, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

مَا حَابَ مَنْ اسْتِخَارَ وَلَا نَدِمَ مَنْ اسْتَشَارَ.

“The one who does an act to seek what is best [*istikhara*] never fails, and the one who consults others never regret it.”

If you ever make a vow [*nadhr*] to Allah, whether it takes in the form of prayers, charity or anything else, hasten to fulfil it and do

¹ The Istikhara Prayers (to sought what is best)

دُعَاءُ الْإِسْتِخَارَةِ

not get used to making frequent vows, for Satan may lure you into this to induce you to default.

If you swear to do something, and then find it better not to do it, or vice versa, then do whatever is best and expiate for your oath.

Beware of swearing or testifying based on conjecture, even if you are almost sure, let alone when it is deceptive or dubious. If your oath ever leads you to take another Muslim's money wrongly, you must return what you have received and expiate for your pledge. The process consists of

فَكَفَّارَتُهُ إِطْعَامُ عَشْرَةِ مَسَاكِينَ مِنْ أَوْسَطِ مَا تُطْعَمُونَ أَهْلِيكُمْ أَوْ كِسْوَتُهُمْ أَوْ تَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ.

“For expiation, feed ten indigent persons, on a scale of the average for the food of your families; or clothe them, or give a slave his freedom. If that is beyond your means, fast for three days.”¹

Never swear falsely, for this destroys homes and plunges the one who does it in the fire of Hell.

You must be very careful of false testimony, for it is one of the greatest sins, and the Prophet, may blessings and peace be upon him, has associated it with idolatry. If to abstain from testifying when able to is a great sin, then, what must be the case with deliberate falsification?

نَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ السَّلَامَةَ وَالْعَافِيَةَ قَبْلَ حُصُولِ النَّدَامَةِ.

We ask Allah for safety and well being before the advent of regret.

¹ Surah 5 Al Maidah Verse 89.

Chapter Twenty-One

Piously Devout & Piety [*Wara* ’]

It is incumbent upon you to be piously devout and piety [*wara* ’] and avoid prohibited and suspect things. Being *wara* is the pillar of religion, and it is the pivot emphasised by the practising scholars. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, and his family said,

كُلُّ لَحْمٍ نَبَتَ مِنْ سُخْتٍ فَالْتَّارُ أَوْلَى بِهِ.

“All flesh that has grown on wrongfully acquired money, the Fire has first right to it.”

And he, may blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَنْ اتَّقَى الشُّبُهَاتِ اسْتَبْرَأَ لِدِينِهِ وَعَرْضِهِ، وَمَنْ وَقَعَ فِي الشُّبُهَاتِ وَقَعَ فِي الْحَرَامِ.

“The one who guards himself against suspect things has protected his religion and his honour, and the one who falls into suspect things will fall into the prohibited.”

You should know that those who acquire prohibited and suspect things are seldom granted success in performing good deeds, and when they appear to be doing so, these are inevitably inwardly tarnished with hidden things which spoil them, such as self-admiration and ostentation or showing off.

In any case, the works of those who subsist on illicit resources are rejected, for Allah is Good and accepts only that which is good.

The explanation of this is that acts can only be performed by using the body, and the body can only move by the energy obtained from food. If that food is vile, the energy it produces and the movements which result will also be foul. Abdullah ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with them both, said, “If you pray until your backs become bent, and fast until you become thin like strings, Allah will only accept this if done with safeguarding your piety and piousness or scrupulousness.

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said,

مَنْ اشْتَرَى ثَوْبًا بِعَشْرَةِ دَرَاهِمٍ، وَفِيهَا دِرْهَمٌ مِنْ حَرَامٍ، لَمْ يَتَقَبَّلِ اللَّهُ لَهُ صَلَاةً مَا دَامَ عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ مِنْهُ.

“The prayers of a man who buys a garment for ten dirhams and one of which is an illicit dirham, Allah will not accept his prayer as long as he is wearing any part of it.”

If this is the situation about a garment one-tenth of the price of which is illicit, what if the whole of it was so? And if this is the situation with garments worn on the outside of the body, what about nutrition which runs through the veins and joints and infiltrates the whole body?

You should know that prohibited things are of two categories. One of which are those which are not permitted in themselves, as carcasses, blood, and alcohol. These can never become permissible except in dire necessity when they are the only things available, and one’s survival depends on using them.

Secondly, that which is licit [*halal*] in itself such as wood and clean water, but which is owned by someone else, thus remaining illicit until acquired by lawful means such as buying, or receiving as a gift or an inheritance, and so forth.

Doubtful or suspect things [*syubhat*] are of many degrees. In some case, some prohibition may almost be convinced but still entertain the possibility of their being permissible or licit; these things should be considered prohibited.

Other things you may be convinced are licit [*halal*], but doubt exists that they may be prohibited; these should be avoided out of piety [*wara*'] or scrupulousness.

Other things are between these two degrees; for instance, those items or issues that have an equal chance of being licit [*halal*] or illicit [*haram*]. He may blessings and peace be upon him said,

دَعُ مَا يَرِيئُكَ إِلَى مَا لَا يَرِيئُكَ.

“Leave that which is suspect in favour of that which is not.”

A man's devoutness and piousness or scrupulousness are measured by his abstaining from anything suspect until its status is clarified. A servant of Allah does not become a truly righteous man mindful of his duties to Allah [*taqwa*] until he abstains from things which are undoubtedly *halal* for fear of that which may follow and be doubtful or *haram*. He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, and his family said,

لَا يَبْلُغُ الْعَبْدُ دَرَجَةَ الْمُتَّقِينَ حَتَّى يَتْرَكَ مَا لَا بَأْسَ بِهِ، حَدَرًا مِمَّا بِهِ بَأْسٌ.

“A servant does not attain the rank of *taqwa* until he abstains from that which is harmless for fear of [falling into] that which is harmful.”

And the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, used to say, “We used to leave seventy *halal* avenues for fear of falling into the *haram*.” But this is something that has long gone. Where are we now to find such piety or scrupulousness as will keep us from the suspect and *haram* things? There is no ability and strength except only by Allah.

It is incumbent upon that you should know that everything that Allah has forbidden you to be able to avoid it, for the one who does not recognise evil falls into it.

You should also know that a religious man is not likely to do anything which is in itself *haram* such as eating forbidden animals or wrongfully appropriating other people's money by coercion, injustice, theft or pillage, for these usually proceed from hard oppressive men and rebellious demons. But religious men are prey to ambiguities because they neglect three things.

Firstly, they do not investigate thoroughly where this is appropriate. To expound this further, we would say that in your dealings with people you should see them as falling into three categories.

The first comprises those whom you know to be good and virtuous: you may eat their food and deal with them without inquiring.

The second is those people whom you know nothing about, whether good or bad. When you wish to deal with those people or accept gifts from them, then scrupulousness obliges you to inquire about them, but gently. Should you feel that this may hurt them, then silence is better.

The third comprises those whom you know to be wrongdoers: usurers, for instance, or people careless about their buying and selling and not concerned where the source of the money. It is better not to deal with such people at all; but if you must, then investigate and inquire beforehand, for this is a part of scrupulousness, until you know that their licit or permissible possessions are free from ambiguity, and then still be careful.

If any object reaches you that you know, or suspect from its appearances, to be illicit or suspect, then do not hesitate to refuse it, even if given to you by the most virtuous of men.

Secondly, they do not safeguard themselves against invalid transactions. This safeguarding is effected by avoiding all wrong and discouraged kinds of sales and by neither selling nor buying except by valid contract. There is, however, no harm in purchases with no deal involving insignificant things.

Avoid cheating, lying, and making oaths concerning any merchandise. Do not hide a defect in your merchandise, that could prevent the buyer from paying the same price. Beware greatly of usury [*riba*], for it is one of the major sins. Allah the Exalted says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَذَرُوا مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الرِّبَا إِن كُنتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ. فَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا بِحَرْبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ.

“O you who believe! Fear Allah and renounce what remains due to you from usury [*riba*], if you are true believers. And if you do not then be warned of war against you from Allah and His Messenger.”¹

And the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, cursed the taker of usury, his client, clerk, and witness.

The summation of the law for usury is that it renders illicit the trading of money for its kind, for instance, silver for silver, and food for its nature, for example, wheat for wheat, except when the amounts exchanged are precisely equal. If the types differ, for example, gold for silver or dates for wheat, differences in value are allowed, and payment should be immediate. There is no usury in trading an animal for an animal or a garment or food for the money.

You should beware of hoarding [*ihhtikar*], which is to buy food which is much needed, and then hoard it until the price goes up.

Thirdly, they are engrossed in the world’s cravings and indulge abundantly in its pleasures. Scrupulousness under such circumstances becomes difficult, and the lawful is narrowed down. Lawful things do not bear extravagance.

On the other hand, scrupulousness is rendered easy for those who want what is necessary from the world only. The Proof of Islam, may Allah spread his benefit, said, “If you are content with one rough shirt a year and two loaves of coarse grain each day, you will never be short of your legal sufficiency, for the lawful is abundant. You are not required to investigate deep into everything, but to be wary of that which you either know is unlawful or suspect it to be so from any evident indications associated with the money.”

When you have suspicions, then scrupulousness obliges you to abstain even though that thing may be lawful, to all outward appearances. For sin is that which causes inward doubt and hesitation also should you be given a legal opinion by those entitled to provide them with as he may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him stated.

¹ Surah 2 Al Baqara Verse 278 – 279.

But this concerns those whose hearts are illuminated and who incline to the side of abstinence, and not that of indulgence.

Do not think that scrupulousness involves only food and clothes; instead, it involves everything. However, if you have lawful and more purely lawful, or lawful and suspect things, then use the most lawful that you have in matters of food. For everything depends on food which, when licit, has a tremendous illuminating influence on the heart and gives the body energy for worship. One of our predecessors said, “Eat what you will, for in the same wise your actions will be.

Ibrahim ibn Adham, may Allah have mercy on him, said, “If you eat well, you will no longer feel obliged to pray at night and fast by day.”

فَاعْلَمْ ذَلِكَ!

You should know this!

وَبِاللَّهِ التَّوْفِيقُ.

Allah is He Who grants success.

Chapter Twenty-Two

Enjoining Good & Forbidding Evil

You must enjoin good [*Amar Ma'ruf*] and forbid evil [*Nahi Munkar*], for this is the pivot around which religion revolves, and is the reason why Allah revealed His Books and sent His Messengers. It is considered a duty by the consensus of all Muslims, and a great many passages in the Book and *Sunnah* enjoin it and warn about its neglect. Allah the Exalted says:

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ.

“Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones who will succeed.”¹

In many contexts has Allah attributed enjoining good and forbidding evil to the believers, on some occasions even before assigning faith to them, and on others, before mentioning the regular performance of prayers and the giving of zakat.

He Exalted is He, says,

لُعِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَى لِسَانِ دَاوُدَ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ. كَانُوا لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَنْ مُنْكَرٍ فَعَلُوهُ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ.

¹ Surah 3 Ala Imran Verse 104.

“The tongue of David cursed those of the children of Israel who disbelieved, and Jesus son of Mary because they rebelled and used to transgress. They restrained not one another from the wickedness they did. Indeed, evil was what they used to do.”¹

And He, the Exalted say,

وَاتَّقُوا فِتْنَةً لَا تُصِيبُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْكُمْ خَاصَّةً.

“And be mindful of tumult or oppression, which affect in particular not only those of you who do wrong.”²

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَنْ رَأَى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيَعْرِضْهُ بِيَدِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسَانِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهِ، وَذَلِكَ أَضْعَفُ الْإِيمَانِ.

“Anyone of you who sees a reprehensible, a wrong or evil thing or deed, should change it with his hand; if he is unable to then with his tongue if he is unable to then with his heart and this is the weakest degree of faith.”

And he, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ، لَتَأْمُرَنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، أَوْ لَيُوشِكَنَّ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَبْعَثَ عَلَيْكُمْ عِقَابًا مِنْهُ، ثُمَّ تَدْعُوهُ فَلَا يَسْتَجِيبُ لَكُمْ.

“By the One in Whose Hand lies my soul, you should enjoin good and forbid evil if not Allah will soon send His punishment upon you; after that, you pray, but your prayers will not be answered.”

And he, may the blessings and peace be upon him said,

لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ لَمْ يَرْحَمْ صَغِيرَنَا وَيُوَقِّرْ كَبِيرَنَا وَيَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَى عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ.

“The one who is not compassionate to our young and respectful to our elders, and who does not enjoin good and forbid evil, is not one of us.”

You should know that enjoining good and forbidding evil is a

¹ Surah 5 Al Maidah Verses 78 – 79.

² Surah 8 An Anfal Verse 25.

collective obligation [*fardu kifaya*] which if discharged by some is not incumbent upon the rest, and the reward being proper to those who fulfilled it. If no one does it, everyone aware of it and able to act is held responsible.

It is incumbent upon you when you see someone neglecting an act of goodness or committing an act of evil is to make him aware of the good or evil nature of the action, as the case may be. If he does not respond you must counsel and put fear into him; if he is still not rebuked then you must coerce him or even beat and compel him to stop the evil he is engaged in, and break the forbidden instruments of distraction, pour away the wine, and restore illicit money to its rightful owners. This last degree is only for those who have either dedicated themselves wholly to Allah or are authorised delegates of the ruler. The first two degrees, which are the appraisal of things as good or evil and counselling, are only neglected by confused, ignorant people or scholars who are inadequate.

You should know that enjoining obligatory and forbidding prohibited things is itself an obligation. Enjoining recommended and forbidding disliked things is itself recommended.

It is incumbent upon you to enjoin good or forbid evil and if they do not listen to you must leave the place where evil is being committed and those who commit it until they return to Allah's ordinance. Likewise, you must detest sins, and those who persist in doing them and loathe them for the sake of Allah is a duty for all believers.

When you become angry because you were wronged or insulted, and this shows on your face, and you find that your loathing of that deed and the person who did it are more than your hatred of any evil that you see or hear about, then know for sure that your faith is weak, and your honour and wealth are dearer to you than your religion.

You are permitted to remain silent if you know with certainty that if you enjoin good or forbid evil, your words will neither be listened to nor accepted, or there will ensure apparent harm either to yourself or your property. Similar when enjoining and forbidding

change from being an obligation into being a tremendous virtue, which indicates that the one who does them loves Allah and prefers Him to all else. And if you come to know that evil will increase if forbidden, or that the harm will involve other Muslims in addition to yourself, then silence is better and, in some cases, obligatory.

Beware of dissimulation, for it is a crime that is to remain silent for fear of losing a position, money, or any other benefit the source of which is the person committing the reprehensible act or any other depraved person.

You should know that when you enjoin or forbid something that this should be done sincerely for Allah gently, wisely and with compassion, for these attributes do not combine in one person who acts and refrains following his injunctions but that his words become effective and evoke reverence, a robust response from the heart, and a sweetness in the ears; seldom shall his words be rejected.

Anyone who has real vigilance for Allah, reliance upon Him, and has acquired the attribute of mercy towards His servants, cannot prevent himself from removing every evil that he sees except when prevented from doing so by means which he cannot overcome.

You should beware of spying, which is seeking to know the private affairs of other Muslims and their hidden sins.

The Prophet may peace be upon him said,

مَنْ تَتَبَعَ عَوْرَةَ أَخِيهِ الْمُسْلِمِ تَتَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَوْرَتَهُ حَتَّى يَفْضَحَهُ وَلَوْ فِي جَوْفِ بَيْتِهِ.

“The one who seeks out the secrets of his brother Muslim will have Allah seeking out his secrets until He exposes him, even should he be in the depths of his house.”

You should know that a concealed sin harms only its doer, but when it becomes public and not stopped its harm becomes general.

When sins and reprehensible or evil things become obscenely in evidence where you live, and you despair of truth being accepted, then isolate yourself, for in this lies safety; or emigrate to another place, which action is better.

For when chastisement falls on a place it includes both the wicked and the good; to the believer who was neglectful in supporting Allah's religion it is expiation and mercy, but for others, it is chastisement and an affliction.

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ.

And Allah knows best.

Chapter Twenty-Three

Social Duties

It is incumbent upon you to deal justly with those who are part of your responsibility, whether in general or personal. Be altogether protecting and concerned for those people, for Allah, the Exalted, will call you to account in their regard, and every shepherd will be asked to account for his flock.

By your responsibilities, refers to your seven organs, which are your tongue, ears, eyes, stomach, private parts, hands and feet. These are your responsibilities which Allah has given you and a trust with which He has entrusted you, which you should restrain from sin and use in His obedience. For Allah, the Exalted, created them for you to use them in your obedience to Him; they are among the greatest of His favours, for which we should thank Him by using them to obey Him, Glory be to Him, and not in His disobedience. If you do not do this, you will be turning Allah's favour into ingratitude. Had Allah the Exalted not made these organs to be your servants and made them obey you by disposition, you would not have been able to use them to disobey Him at all. When you intend to use any of them sinfully its response in its way by saying, "O servant of Allah! Fear and be mindful of your duties to Allah! Do not force me to commit that which Allah has forbidden me!" If you then sin, it will turn to Allah and says, "O Lord, I forbade him. However, he did not listen; I am innocent of what he did." One day, you will stand before Allah, the Exalted, and

these organs will testify to every good you do with it or to every evil in which you do while using them,

يَوْمَ لَا مَرَدَّ لَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَكُم مِّن مَّלْجَأٍ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن تَكْوِيلٍ .

“On a Day which there will be no putting back, because of the Ordainment of Allah! That Day there will be for you no place of refuge, nor will there be for you any room for denial of your sins!”¹

يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ . إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ .

“The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail, except those who come to Allah with a sound heart.”²

As for your public responsibilities, these are all people entrusted by Allah to your custody, such as children, wife, and slave, all of whom are part of your charge. You must guide them to the performance of that which Allah has made obligatory and the avoidance of that which He forbade. Beware of allowing them to neglect an obligatory or commit a forbidden act; summon them to that in which their salvation and happiness in the hereafter are. Teach them courtesy and do not plant in their hearts the love of the world and its cravings, for you would thus have done them harm. It is said that the wife and children of a man shall clutch him before Allah and say, “O our Lord! This one did not enlighten us about Your rights upon us; therefore, separate us from him!”

It is incumbent that you must treat them with justice and graciousness. Justice is to give them everything that Allah has made their rightfully in the way of expenditure, clothes, and living with them charitably. One of the obligations is to take the wronged one’s rights from the unjust among them. As there is a hadith which said,

إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ يُكْتَبُ جَبَّارًا وَمَا يَمْلِكُ إِلَّا أَهْلَ بَيْتِهِ .

“Indeed, a servant may be recorded as being a tyrant when he has power over his family alone.”

That is when he treats them high-handedly.

¹ Surah 42 Ash Shura Verse 47.

² Surah 26 Ash Shu’araa Verses 88-89.

As for graciousness, this is to treat them gently, and not to be harsh in asking them for the rights assigned to you by Allah, and to treat them with nobility, and to laugh with them at times without falling into sin, in a manner that removes estrangement and repugnance but maintains reverence and respect.

It is incumbent upon you to forgive the wrongdoers among them and those who offend you; absolve them inwardly, for what they may have embezzled of your wealth you will one day find on the side of good deeds of the Balance; they should not acquire punishment because of you, while because of them you are rewarded. Once the Messenger of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him, was asked, “How often should a slave be forgiven each day?” and replied, “For seventy mistakes.”

This forgiveness touches upon your rights over them, but never those of Allah.

You should devote special protection and anxiety to the women of your household. Teach them the rules about menstruation, the obligations of a bath [*ghusl*], ablution [*wudu*], praying, fasting, the rights of their husbands, and other similar things.

Responsibility may be extensive and involve many people, as is the case with rulers and scholars. “Each shepherd will be questioned about his flock.” Allah, the Exalted say,

“Allah enjoins justice and goodness.”¹ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ.

And he, may blessings and peace be upon him, invoked,

اللَّهُمَّ مَنْ وَلِيَ مِنْ أُمَمٍ شَيْئًا فَارْقُ بِهِمْ فَأَرْقُ بِهِ وَمَنْ شَقَّ عَلَيْهِمْ فَاشْفُقْ عَلَيْهِ.

“O Allah! Treat gently those who are given authority over any of my nation and treat them gently and treat harshly those who treat them harshly.”

And he may blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَا مِنْ وَالٍ يَمُوتُ يَوْمَ يَمُوتُ وَهُوَ غَاشٌّ لِرَعِيَّتِهِ، إِلَّا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ.

¹ Surah 16 An Nahl Verse 90.

“No ruler dies having cheated his subjects, but that Allah forbids the Garden to him.”

It is incumbent for you to be loyal to your parents, for this is one of the most certain duty. Beware of severing your ties with them, which is one of the greatest sins. Allah, the Exalted say,

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا.

“Your Lord has decreed that you worship none other than Him and treat your parents excellently.”¹

And in another statement, the Exalted also says,

أَنْ أَشْكُرَ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ.

“Show gratitude to Me and your parents.”²

Notice how He associated the exhortation to treat them well with the unification of Him and to thank them with thanking Him. It is thus incumbent upon you to seek and make them pleased with you and obey them except in committing sinful things or omitting obligations. Prefer them to yourself and give their affairs priority over your own.

In disloyalty, it includes withholding from them any good that you can bring them, as well as frowning and chiding. He, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

يُوجَدُ رِيحُ الْجَنَّةِ مِنْ مَسِيرَةِ أَلْفِ عَامٍ وَلَا يَجِدُهُ عَاقٍ وَلَا قَاطِعٍ رَحِمَ وَلَا شَيْخٍ زَانٍ وَلَا مُسْبِلٍ إِزَارَهُ حَيَلَاءَ، إِنَّمَا الْكِبْرِيَاءُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ.

“The scent of the Garden is perceived within a thousand years travelling distance, except by one who is disloyal to his parents or the severer of kinship bonds or the adulterous old man or the one who lengthens his garments out of vanity for pride, for it is solely the attribute of Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.”

¹ Surah 17 Al Israa Verse 23.

² Surah 31 Luqman Verse 14.

And he may blessings and peace be upon him said that Allah the Exalted says,

مَنْ أَصْبَحَ مُرْضِيًّا لِوَالِدَيْهِ مُسْخِطًا لِي فَأَنَا عَنْهُ رَاضٍ، وَمَنْ أَصْبَحَ مُسْخِطًا لِوَالِدَيْهِ مُرْضِيًّا لِي فَأَنَا عَنْهُ سَاخِطٌ.

“The one upon whom morning comes, and he has done what pleases his parents but displeases Me, I am pleased with him; and the one upon whom morning comes, and he has done what displeases his parents but pleases Me, I am displeased with him.”

Parents should help their children to be loyal to them by not insisting on every one of their rights, especially in these days when loyalty is scarce, evil rife, and parents consider that the most loyal of their children is the one who does not injure them. Just as the Messenger of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him said,

رَحِمَ اللَّهُ وَالِدَا أَعَانٍ وَلَدُهُ عَلَى بَرِّهِ.

“Allah have mercy on a parent who helps his child to be loyal to him.”

It is incumbent upon you to respect your ties of kinship and start with the closest to you; give generously of the good things you have and start with the nearest. Allah, the Exalted say,

وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنبِ.

“Worship Allah, join not partners with Him, do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, the neighbours who are of kin, and the neighbour who is not and the companion by your side.”¹

Allah has, in many contexts, enjoined good behaviour toward kinfolks in His precious Book. The Messenger of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him and his family, said,

الصَّدَقَةُ عَلَى الْقَرَابَةِ صَدَقَةٌ وَصِلَةٌ.

“Charity to kinfolks is both charity and joining of kinship bonds.”

¹ Surah 4 An Nisaa Verse 36.

And he may peace be upon him said,

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيُصِلْ رَحِمَهُ.

“Those who believe in Allah and the Last Day joins of kinship bonds.”

In another hadith it narrates,

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيُكْرِمْ جَارَهُ.

“Let him who believes in Allah and the Last Day honour his neighbour.”

And he may blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَا زَالَ جِبْرِيلُ يُوصِينِي بِالْجَارِ حَتَّى خَشِيتُ أَنَّهُ يُورَثَهُ.

“The Angel Jibril has given me religious counsel so often about the neighbour that I thought he would be allowed to inherit.”

Maintaining ties of kinship and kind behaviour towards neighbours will not be complete unless one refrain from harming them, endure the damaging they do, and does good to them according to the means at one's disposal.

Once he may blessings and peace be upon him,

لَيْسَ الْوَاصِلُ بِالْمُكَافِي، إِنَّمَا الْوَاصِلُ الَّذِي إِذَا قُطِعَتْ رَحِمُهُ وَصَلَهَا.

“The maintainer of kinship ties is not him who rewards acts of goodness; rather, he is one who when his kinship ties are severed, joins them again.”

And he may blessings and peace be upon him,

وَطَنُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ عَلَى أَنْ تُحْسِنُوا إِذَا أَحْسَنَ النَّاسُ وَلَا تُسِيئُوا إِذَا أَسَاءُوا.

“Habituate yourselves to kindness when people behave kindly towards you and do not misbehave when people behave badly towards you.”

وَبِاللَّهِ التَّوْفِيقُ.

And Success is by Allah.

Chapter Twenty-Four

To Love & Hate for Allah's Sake

It is incumbent upon you must love and hate for the sake of Allah, for this is one of the firmest handholds of faith. The Messenger of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him and his family, said,

أَفْضَلُ الْأَعْمَالِ الْحُبُّ فِي اللَّهِ وَالْبُغْضُ فِي اللَّهِ تَعَالَى.

“The best of deeds is love and hate for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.”

When you love the servant, who is obedient to Allah because of his obedience, and hate the one who is disobedient to Allah because of his disobedience, and not for any other reason, then you are one who truly loves and hates for the sake of Allah. If you find in yourself no love for the people of goodness, because of their virtue, and no loathing for the people of evil, because of their wickedness, then know that your faith is weak.

It is incumbent to keep the company of the best of people and avoid that of the worst; sit with the virtuous and avoid the unjust. He, may blessings and peace be upon him said,

أَمْرُ الْمَرْءِ عَلَى أَمْرِ دِينِ خَلِيلِهِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَحَدُكُمْ مَنْ يُخَالِلُ.

“A man's religion is that of his intimate, so let each of you consider who to be intimate with.”

And he may blessings and peace be upon him said,

وَالْجَلِيسُ الصَّالِحُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الْوَحْدَةِ، الْوَحْدَةُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ جَلِيسِ الشُّوءِ.

“A good companion is better than solitude, and solitude is better than an evil companion.”

You should know that associating with people of goodness and keeping their company implant the love of kindness in the heart and help to practice it while associating with the people of evil and keeping their company implant the love of evil in the heart and the love of practising it. The one who associates closely with a particular group of people, inevitably ends up loving them, whether they are good or evil, and a man is with those he loves both in this world and in the hereafter.

It is incumbent to be merciful to the servants of Allah and compassionate to His creatures, and be gentle and kind, and of engaging manners, and easy to approach. Beware of being stubborn, coarse, obscene, or difficult to approach. He may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

وَأَنَّمَا يَرْحَمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الرَّحْمَاءَ وَمَنْ لَا يَرْحَمُ لَا يُرْحَمُ.

“Allah is only Merciful to those of His servants who are merciful; those who show no mercy, are shown no mercy.”

He may peace be upon him said,

الْمُؤْمِنُ آلفٌ مَأْلُوفٌ وَلَا خَيْرَ فِيمَنْ لَا يَأْلَفُ وَلَا يُؤْلَفُ.

“A believer is affable and easy to approach; there is no good in anyone who is neither affable nor easy to approach.”

It is incumbent to teach the ignorant, guide those who stray, remind the distracted, and beware of neglecting any of these things by saying that, “Only those who possess knowledge and do practice it can teach and remind; I am not one of them, and so am not worthy to guide others, for such is the attribute of the great,” and this is nothing but satanic deceit, for teaching and reminding are part of practising what one knows, and great men only became significant by the grace of Allah and by their guiding Allah’s servants to His path. If you are unworthy now, then the only way you can become worthy is to do good and invite people to it. Evil lies only in making claims and leading others to other than the truth.

It is incumbent to comfort the broken-hearted, be gentle to the weak and the needy, console the poor, be lenient with the insolvent, and lend to those who ask you. There is a *hadith* narration that said,
 إِنَّ ثَوَابَ الْقَرْضِ يَزِيدُ عَلَى ثَوَابِ الصَّدَقَةِ بِثَمَانِيَةِ أَضْعَافٍ.

“The reward for a loan exceeds that for charity eight times.”

The reason is that a loan is taken only by one who needs it.

Console those who are stricken by adversity, for he may peace be upon him, said,

مَنْ عَزَّى مُصَاباً (أَيَّ صَبْرَهُ) كَانَ لَهُ مِثْلُ أَجْرِهِ.

“The one who consoles a man stricken by adversity, that is, helps him endure patiently, has a reward similar to his.”

You should beware of gloating, which is to rejoice at another Muslim’s misfortune, for he, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,
 لَا تُظْهِرِ الشَّمَاتَةَ بِأَخِيكَ فَيَعَافِيَهُ اللَّهُ وَيَبْتَلِيكَ.

“Do not show any gloating regarding your brother, lest Allah releases him and afflict you.”

It is incumber upon you to be aware of openly reviling a Muslim for a sin he has fallen into, for the one who does so will be afflicted likewise before he dies.

It is incumbent to relieve those in hardship, fulfil the needs of those in need, and keep the sinner’s disgrace concealed. For he may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

وَمَنْ يَسَّرَ عَلَى مُعْسِرٍ يَسَّرَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ، وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا سَتَرَهُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ،
 وَمَنْ فَرَّجَ عَنْ مُسْلِمٍ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرْبِ الدُّنْيَا فَرَّجَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرْبِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ،
 وَمَنْ كَانَ فِي حَاجَةِ أَخِيهِ كَانَ اللَّهُ فِي حَاجَتِهِ، وَاللَّهُ عَوْنُ الْعَبْدِ مَا كَانَ الْعَبْدُ فِي عَوْنِ
 أَخِيهِ.

“Allah shall grant ease to him who eases the hardship of another. And shall conceal, in this world and the hereafter, the sins of him who conceals the disgrace of a believer. And He shall relieve from one of

the hardships of the Day of Rising the one who relieves a Muslim from one of the hardships of this world. Allah shall fulfil the need of the man who fulfils his brother's need. Allah assists His servant for as long as he assists his brother."

It is incumbent to remove all that may cause harm from the Muslims' road, for this, is one of the branches of faith. In a narration, the Prophet may Allah's blessings, and peace be upon him, said,

رَأَيْتُ رَجُلًا يَتَقَلَّبُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ فِي غُصْنٍ شَوْكٍ قَطَعَهُ مِنْ طَرِيقِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ.

"I saw a man travelling about in Heaven because of a branch of thorns which he had removed from the Muslims' road."

It is incumbent to show compassion to the orphan and stroke his head, for he, may peace be upon him, said,

مَنْ مَسَحَ عَلَى رَأْسِ يَتِيمٍ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَعْرَةٍ مَرَّتْ عَلَيْهَا يَدُهُ عَشْرَ حَسَنَاتٍ.

"When a man strokes an orphan's head, Allah records for each hair that his hand has touched ten good deeds."

Try to gladden the hearts of believers in every possible way, as long as these ways are not sinful.

It is incumbent to intercede for anyone who requests it of you with those with whom you are influential, for Allah will ask His servant to account for his influence just as He will ask him to account for his money. But if a servant falls liable to official punishment [*hadd*] such as that about adultery or theft, then beware of interceding on his behalf, for intercession in respect of formal punishments is not permissible. If following an act of intercession, you receive a gift, then you should refuse it, for it is a form of usury [*riba*].

It is incumbent to smile at believers, always show them an engaging, friendly face, speak well to them, be gentle and lower your wing to them. Allah the Exalted has said to His Prophet,

وَاحْفَظْ جَنَاحَكَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ.

"And lower your wing to the believers."¹

¹ Surah 15 Al Hijr Verse 88.

And the Prophet, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

لَا تَحْقِرَنَّ مِنَ الْمَعْرُوفِ شَيْئًا وَلَوْ أَنَّ تُلْقَى أَخَاكَ بِوَجْهِ طَلِيقٍ.

“Do not disdain any act of goodness; even should this be meeting your brother with a friendly face.”

And the Prophet, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

“A kind word is a charity.” الْكَلِمَةُ الطَّيِّبَةُ صَدَقَةٌ

It has been handed down that when two Muslims meet and shake hands, a hundred mercies are divided between them, ninety-nine of which are for the friendlier of the two.

You should beware of breaking off relations with a Muslim for the sake of yourself. If you need to leave him for a religious reason then do so for no more than three days, for the Prophet, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

مَنْ هَجَرَ أَخَاهُ فَوْقَ ثَلَاثٍ أَذْخَلَهُ اللَّهُ النَّارَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَتَدَارَكَهُ اللَّهُ بِرَحْمَتِهِ.

“The one who deserts his brother for more than three days will be driven by Allah into the Fire unless Allah rescues him through His mercy.”

The above relates to desertion for discipline; but if it is done because wrong is being committed or a right neglected, then there can be no restoration until he reverts to proper conduct.

It is incumbent to show delight and pleasure when something good occurs to the Muslims, such as the arrival of rains, lowering of prices, or victory over aggressors or disbelievers.

It is incumbent to be sad and aggrieved when hardship befalls them such as epidemics, rising prices, and seditions. Entreat Allah to relieve them of such trials, yet you should accept His decree and ordinance. For indeed, the Messenger of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him and his family said,

مَنْ لَمْ يَهْتَمَّ بِأَمْرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ فَلَيْسَ مِنْهُمْ.

“The one who is not interested in the affairs of the Muslims is not one of them.”

And may Allah's blessings be upon him said,

مَثَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي تَوَادُّهِمْ وَتَعَاطُفِهِمْ مَثَلُ الْجَسَدِ الْوَاحِدِ إِذَا اشْتَكَى مِنْهُ عُضْوٌ تَدَاعَى لَهُ سَائِرُ الْجَسَدِ بِالسَّهَرِ وَالْحُمَّى.

“The believers are, in their mutual affection and sympathy, as one body; when one of its organs falls ill, the rest of the body are mutually affected with fever and sleeplessness.”

It is incumbent that when a Muslim does you a favour, you must accept it and thank and reward him. If you cannot reward him, or you fear to offend him, then pray for him. For indeed, he may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

لَوْ أَهْدَيْتَنِي إِلَى ذِرَاعٍ أَوْ كُرَاعٍ لَقَبِلْتُ وَلَوْ دُعِيتُ إِلَى ذِرَاعٍ أَوْ كُرَاعٍ لَأَجَبْتُ.

“Were I to be offered as little like a goat's thigh or leg as a gift I would accept and were I to be invited to a meal of a goat's thigh or leg I would attend.”

And he also said,

مَنْ إِصْطَنَعَ إِلَيْكُمْ مَعْرُوفًا فَكَافِئُوهُ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَقْدِرُوا عَلَى ذَلِكَ فَادْعُوا لَهُ حَتَّى تَعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ قَدْ كَفَّائْتُمُوهُ.

“When someone does you a favour, you should reward him; if you are unable to then pray for him until you feel that you have rewarded him.”

And he, peace be upon him said,

مَنْ قَالَ لِمَنْ أَسَدَى إِلَيْهِ مَعْرُوفٌ جَزَاكَ اللَّهُ خَيْرًا فَقَدْ أَبْلَغَ فِي الثَّنَاءِ.

“The one who says to someone who has done him a favour, ‘May Allah reward you with goodness!’ has given him an exceedingly good prayer.”

You should never break a Muslim's heart by refusing what he offers you when you know that anything that comes to you through him is in reality from Allah, and he is only His powerless and compelled means.

A prophetic narration states,

مَنْ أَتَاءَ شَيْءٌ مِنْ غَيْرِ مَسْأَلَةٍ وَلَا اسْتِشْرَافٍ نَفْسٍ فَرَدَّهُ فَإِنَّمَا يَرُدُّهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ.

“Anyone who is given something he has neither asked nor longed for and refuses it has refused to take it from Allah.”

A significant disadvantage attaches to refusal, namely that the common folk are accustomed to respecting those who refuse their gifts. It may be that some devout people are motivated in their refusal by the desire to display ascetism [*zuhud*] so that they be thought highly of, which is why a specific authority used ostensibly to accept and secretly dispose of such gifts charitably.

But refusal may become either obligatory or recommended in some situations, as follows:-

- Something may be given to you which you either know or have seen evidence that it is illicit, or an official charity may be given you on the assumption that you are deserving when you are not.
- The giver may be unjust, and persistently so, and you fear that if you accept his favour, your heart will lean toward him and away from what is right.
- You may know from the man's behaviour that he means by his favours to lead you away from the way of Allah using causing you to assist him in committing injustice or neglecting a right. Of this nature is anything taken by a judge, a governor, or any other man in authority from either one or both litigants in a case lodged before him, and this is prohibited bribery. You must, therefore, refuse any gifts given under any of the abovementioned circumstances, of which there are others which shall be mentioned in the appropriate place.

You should beware of invoking against yourself, your children, or any other Muslim, even if they have wronged you. The one who invokes against those who have wronged him shall have his prayer answered. There is a prophetic narration that says,

لَا تَدْعُوا عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ وَلَا عَلَى أَوْلَادِكُمْ وَلَا عَلَى أَمْوَالِكُمْ لَا تُوَافِقُوا سَاعَةً إِجَابَةً.

“Do not invoke against yourselves, your children, or your wealth, for your prayer may coincide with one of the times in which prayers are answered.”

You should be careful not to unjustly harming a Muslim or insulting him. Indeed he, upon him be blessings and peace, said,

مَنْ آذَى مُسْلِمًا فَقَدْ آذَانِي، وَمَنْ آذَانِي فَقَدْ آذَى اللَّهَ.

“Anyone who hurts a Muslim has hurt me, and the man who hurts me has hurt Allah.”

And, he may peace be upon him said,

سَبَابُ الْمُؤْمِنِ فُسُوقٌ وَقِتَالُهُ كُفْرٌ.

“To insult a Muslim is immorality, and to fight him is disbelief.”

You should beware of cursing a Muslim, an animal, an inanimate thing, or any specific person, even if he is a disbeliever unless you know for sure that he has died a disbeliever, as in the cases of Pharaoh and Abu Jahl, or unless you know that Allah’s mercy will not, under any circumstance, reach him, as in the case of the devil. It has been said, “that the curse uttered by a person ascends toward heaven but that the gates are locked against it. It then descends to earth, the gates of which are also locked against it, so that it then goes to the one who was cursed, and either finds him vulnerable to it or else it recoils against its utterer.”

It is incumbent to effect a reconciliation between the hearts of the believers and cause them to love each other by bringing to light their virtues and concealing their vices.

It is incumbent to restore good relations between them, for such a thing is more meritorious than supererogatory prayers and fasts, especially when effected between a father and his son, or a man and his relatives.

Allah the Exalted says,

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوِيكُمْ.

“The believers are but brothers, make peace, therefore, between your two brothers.”¹

You should beware of sowing discord through slander, backbiting or anything else such as will result in antagonism and aversion; for this is considered an immense sin by Allah.

Slander is to report the words of one person to another to create discord between them. Indeed, he may the blessings of Allah and peace be upon him, and his family said,

لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ نَمَّامٌ.

“A slanderer cannot enter the Garden.”

And he may peace be upon him said,

أَبْغَضَكُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى الْمَشَاءُونَ بَيْنَ الْأَحِبَّةِ بِالنَّمِيمَةِ الْمُفْرِقُونَ بَيْنَ الْإِخْوَانِ.

“The most abhorrent amongst you to Allah are those who damage relationships between brothers by slander and create rifts between brothers.”

As regards to backbiting is to say things about a person, in his absence, which he would have resented had he been present, with defamatory intent, whether this defamation is verbal, written, or indicated. The Prophet, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

كُلُّ الْمُسْلِمِ عَلَى الْمُسْلِمِ حَرَامٌ: دَمُهُ وَمَالُهُ وَعَرْضُهُ.

“Every part of a Muslim is sacrosanct about other Muslims: his blood, his wealth, and his honour.”

And he may peace be upon him said,

“Backbiting is worse than adultery. الْعِيبَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الزِّنَا.

Allah revealed to Moses, peace be upon him,

مَنْ مَاتَ تَائِبًا مِنَ الْعِيبَةِ فَهُوَ آخِرُ مَنْ يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَنْ مَاتَ مُصِرًّا عَلَيْهَا فَهُوَ أَوَّلُ مَنْ يَدْخُلُ النَّارَ.

¹ Surah 49 Al Hujaarat Verse 10.

“The one who dies having repented of his backbiting will be the last to enter the Garden, and the one who dies persisting in it will be the first to enter the Fire.”

You should beware of injustice, for it will be darkness on the Day of Rising, especially injustice to others, which is never left alone by Allah. The Prophet, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,
إِنَّ الْمُفْلِسَ مِنْ أُمَّتِي يَأْتِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بِحَسَنَاتٍ كَثِيرَةٍ وَيَأْتِي وَقَدْ ضَرَبَ هَذَا وَشَتَمَ هَذَا
وَأَخَذَ مَالَ هَذَا فَيَأْخُذُ هَذَا مِنْ حَسَنَاتِهِ وَهَذَا مِنْ حَسَنَاتِهِ فَإِنْ فَنِيَتْ حَسَنَاتُهُ أَخَذَ مِنْ
سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ فَطُرِحَتْ عَلَى سَيِّئَاتِهِ ثُمَّ يُقَذَّفُ فِي النَّارِ.

“The bankrupt in my nation is the one who comes on the Day of Rising with numerous good deeds, but who has struck someone, insulted someone else, and taken the money of still another; for they will take from his good deeds one by one until, when his good deeds are exhausted, some of their evil deeds are taken and added to his, after which he is cast into the Fire.”

Therefore, if you ever wrong anyone, hasten to emerge from the situation by submitting to punishment if it is a legal offence, asking to be absolved if it is a matter of honour and returning what you have taken if it is a financial injustice.

There is related narration that said,

مَنْ كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِ لِأَخِيهِ مَظْلَمَةٌ فَلْيَسْتَحِلِّ مِنْهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَا دِينَارَ فِيهِ وَلَا دِرْهَمَ
إِنَّمَا هِيَ الْحَسَنَاتُ وَالسَّيِّئَاتُ.

“The one who has committed an injustice against his brother should ask him to absolve him of it before a day comes when there shall be neither dinar nor dirham, but only good and evil deeds.”

If you find yourself altogether unable to make reparations for some of your injustices, then seek refuge in Allah, the Exalted, with sincerity, urgency, and an acknowledgement of your powerlessness, that He may get your adversary to accept you; also pray in abundance and ask for forgiveness for those whom you have wronged.

It is incumbent upon you to defend the lives, honour and wealth of Muslims as you protect your own, whether they be present or not.

Allah will support the one who supports a Muslim, and he will desert the one who deserts a Muslim.

Chapter Twenty-Five

Advice to Muslims

It is incumbent upon you to give good advice to all Muslims. The highest point of this is that you conceal nothing from them which if made known would result in good or preserve from something evil. The Prophet, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

“Religion is good advice.” الدِّينُ النَّصِيحَةُ.

Part of this is to support a Muslim in his absence as you would in his presence, and not to give him more verbal signs of affection than you have for him in your heart. It is also part of this that when a Muslim asks you for advice, and you know that the correct course does not lie in that which he is inclined to do, you should tell him so.

The presence of envy (jealousy) of the favours Allah has given other Muslims showed the absence of good advice. The origin of such envy is that you find it intolerable that Allah has granted one of His servants a good thing, whether of religion or the world. The utmost limit of envy is to wish that the person is deprived of Allah’s favour.

A prophetic tradition narrated that,

إِنَّ الْحَسَدَ يَأْكُلُ الْحَسَنَاتِ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ النَّارُ الْخَطَبَ.

“Indeed, envy consumes good deeds just as fire consumes dry wood.”

The envious man is objecting to Allah’s management of His Dominion, as if he were saying, “O Lord! You have put Your favours where they do not belong.” It is permitted to be envious without

rancour, whereby when you see the favour of Allah bestowed on one of His servants, you ask Him, Glory to Him, to grant you similarly.

It is incumbent upon you that when someone praises you, you must feel dislike for his praises within your heart. If he has praised you for something you genuinely possess say,

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ مَنْ أَظْهَرَ الْجَمِيلَ، وَسَتَرَ الْقَبِيحَ.

“Praise belongs and thanks to Allah Who has revealed the good things and concealed the ugly ones.”

And if he praises you for something which you do not possess, say as one of our predecessors has said,

اللَّهُمَّ لَا تُؤَاخِذْنِي بِمَا يَقُولُونَ، وَاعْفُزْ لِي مَا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ، وَاجْعَلْ لِي خَيْرًا مِمَّا يَظُنُّونَ.

“O Allah! Do not call me to account for what they say, forgive me what they do not know, and make me better than they think!”

In your case, do not praise anyone unless you know that your praises will urge him to more good works or unless he is a superior man whose superiority is not well known, and you wish to make it so, this being on condition that you are safe from lying and he is safe from conceit.

It is incumbent that when you wish to advise someone regarding any behaviour of his that you have come to know about, talk to him privately, be gentle, and inform the person indirectly and avoid saying it openly. Should he ask you, ‘Who reported this to you?’ then do not tell him lest you stir up enmity between them. If he accepts your advice, then say, “praise and thank Allah and express gratefulness to Him” and if he does not, then blame yourself, and say, “O evil soul! It is through you that I was defeated! Think! You may not have fulfilled the conditions and manners of giving advice.”

If you are given something as a trust, guard it better than if it were your own.

It is incumbent upon you to exercise trust in the proper manners expected of you like return that which was entrusted to you and beware of betraying that trust.

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, and his family said,

“He who cannot keep a trust has no faith.” لَا إِيمَانَ لِمَنْ لَا أَمَانَةَ لَهُ.

And he may peace be upon him said,

ثَلَاثُ مُعَلِّقَاتٍ بِالْعَرْشِ: النِّعْمَةُ تَقُولُ: اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي بِكَ فَلَا أُكْفَرُ، وَالرَّحْمُ يَقُولُ: اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي بِكَ فَلَا أُقْطَعُ، وَالْأَمَانَةُ تَقُولُ: اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي بِكَ فَلَا أُخَانَ.

“Three things are attached to the Throne: Benefaction, which says, “O my Lord! Indeed, I am with You, therefore let me not be denied!” Kinship ties, which say, “O my Lord! Indeed, I am with You, therefore let me not be severed!” and Trust, which says, “O my Lord! Indeed, I am with You, therefore let me not be betrayed!”

It is incumbent upon you to speak truthfully and honour your commitments, and your promises, for breaching obligations and breaking promises are signs of hypocrisy. There is a narration [*hadith*] that states,

آيَةُ الْمُنَافِقِ ثَلَاثٌ: إِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَبَ، وَإِذَا وَعَدَ أَخْلَفَ، وَإِذَا أُؤْتِمِنَ خَانَ.

“The signs of a hypocrite are three: when speaks, he lies; when promises he breaks his promise; and when he is trusted, he betrays that trust.”

And in another version, وَإِذَا عَاهَدَ عَدَرَ وَإِذَا خَاصَمَ فَخَرَ.

“And when he commits, he breaches it, and when he quarrels, he acts corruptly.”

It is incumbent upon you to be wary of argumentation and wrangling, for they cast malice into the breasts of men, alienate hearts, and lead to enmity and hatred. If anyone argues against you and has right on his side, accept what he says, always follow the truth. If, on the other hand, he is wrong, then leave him, for he is ignorant.

And Allah the Exalted says,

“And turn away from the ignorant.” وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ.

¹ Surah 7 Al Araaf Verse 199.

Is it incumbent upon you to renounce all joking; if very occasionally you do joke to assuage a Muslim's heart, then speak only the truth. The Messenger of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him and his family said,

لَا تُمَارِ أَحَاكَ، وَلَا تُمَارِزْهُ، وَلَا تَعِدْهُ مَوْعِدًا فَتُخْلِفْهُ.

“Neither argue with your brother nor quarrel and do not make him a promise and then break it.”

It is incumbent upon you to respect Muslims, especially people of merits such as the scholar, the righteous, the nobleman, and the one whose hair has greyed in Islam.

You should never frighten or alarm a Muslim; never mock, ridicule or despise him, for these are part of threatening and blameworthy behaviour. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said,

بِحَسْبِ امْرِئٍ مِنَ الشَّرِّ أَنْ يَحْقِرَ أَخَاهُ الْمُسْلِمَ.

“It is sufficient evil for a man that he should despise his brother Muslim.”

It is incumbent upon you to be humble [*tawaduk*], for humility is the attribute of believers.

You should beware of pride, for Allah does not like the proud. Allah raises those who humble themselves and degrades those who are proud. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, and his family said,

لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ مَنْ كَانَ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ مِنْ كِبَرٍ.

“The man in whose heart is an atom's weight of pride will not enter the Garden.”

And he may peace be upon him also explained that,

الْكِبَرُ: بَطَرُ الْحَقِّ، (يَعْنِي رَدَّهُ) وَعَظْمُ النَّاسِ (يَعْنِي اخْتِفَارَهُمْ).

“Pride is to deny the truth, that is, to despise or belittle other people.”

And the man who looks at himself with admiration and at others with disdain is proud.

There are signs which distinguish the humble from the proud; that Allah may separate the vile from the good.

لِيَمِيزَ اللَّهُ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ.

“So that Allah may separate the impure from the pure.”¹

Signs of humility include a liking for obscurity, a dislike of fame, to accept truth whether it be from a man of high or low status.

Also, to love the poor, associate with them and keep their company.

Also, to fulfil the rights people have upon you as completely as you can, thank those of them who perform their duties to you and excuse those who are remiss.

Signs of pride include a liking for sitting in the positions of most dignity when in a company or a public gathering, praising oneself, speaking in a snobbish manner, openly displaying haughtiness and arrogance, strutting, neglecting the rights your brothers have upon you while at the same time demanding the rights you have upon them.

¹ Surah 8 Al-Anfal Verse 37

Chapter Twenty-Six

Salutations & Manners

It is incumbent upon you to greet all Muslims with Peace [*Salam*], whether you know them or not. If you greet someone and he does not return your greeting do not think ill of him, but rather say to yourself, “He may not have heard, or perhaps he answered, and I did not hear.”

When you enter your house greet your family with the ‘*salam*’, and when you enter a mosque, or an empty house say,

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى عِبَادِ اللَّهِ الصَّالِحِينَ.

“Peace be upon us and on the virtuous servants of Allah.”

When you meet a Muslim, always try to greet him before he gives you welcome greetings.

The Messenger of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him, was once asked,

إِذَا لَقِيَ الْمُسْلِمُ الْمُسْلِمَ فَأَيُّهُمَا يَبْدَأُ بِالسَّلَامِ؟ قَالَ: أَوْلَاهُمَا بِاللَّهِ.

“When a Muslim meets a Muslim, who should give greetings first?” And he replied: “The one most devoted to Allah.”

And in another hadith,

يُسَلِّمُ الرَّكَّابُ عَلَى الْمَاشِي وَالْقَائِمُ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِ وَالصَّغِيرُ عَلَى الْكَبِيرِ وَالْقَلِيلُ عَلَى الْكَثِيرِ.

That a rider should greet a pedestrian, a man standing should greet a man seated, a younger man should greet an older man, and a smaller group should welcome a larger.

It is incumbent upon you that when someone sneezes and then he praises Allah,

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ

reply to him, “May Allah have mercy upon you.”

يَرْحَمُكَ اللَّهُ

If he does not praise Allah, then remind him by saying, “All praises and thanks belong to Allah.”

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ

Do not enter a house other than your own without asking permission; if you ask thrice and receive no answer, then ask no more and depart. When a Muslim calls you, answer with

“At your service!”

لِيَبْكَا!

If he invites you to his food, accept unless you have a legitimate excuse.

If he adjures you to do something, allow him to fulfil his oath so long as it does not involve anything sinful.

Do not implore anyone by invoking Allah, but if beseeched in this way comply. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, and his family said,

مَلْعُونٌ مَّنْ سَأَلَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلْعُونٌ مَّنْ سُئِلَ بِاللَّهِ فَلَمْ يُعْطِ.

“Cursed be he who asks something using Allah’s name, also cursed be he who was asked for something by Allah’s name yet he did not give.”

It is incumbent upon you to visit the sick, attend funerals, and visit your Muslim brothers in Allah whenever you long to do so. Shake their hands when you meet, inquire about how they and their loved ones are, so that if any of them is sick, you may visit him, and if any of them is working on something you may help if you can or else pray for him.

It is incumbent upon you to think well of all Muslims and beware of thinking ill of any of them. He may blessings and peace be upon him said,

وَحَصْنَتَانِ لَيْسَ فَوْقَهُمَا شَيْءٌ مِّنَ الْخَيْرِ، حُسْنُ الظَّنِّ بِاللَّهِ وَحُسْنُ الظَّنِّ بِعِبَادِ اللَّهِ.

وَحَصْنَتَانِ لَيْسَ فَوْقَهُمَا شَيْءٌ مِّنَ الشَّرِّ، سُوءُ الظَّنِّ بِاللَّهِ وَسُوءُ الظَّنِّ بِعِبَادِ اللَّهِ.

“Two traits are unsurpassed by any other good: thinking well of Allah and thinking well of His servants. And two traits are unsurpassed by any other evil: thinking ill of Allah and thinking ill of His servants.”

To think well of Muslims is to regard nothing they do or say as evil when it can be interpreted otherwise. If you cannot find a good interpretation, in the case of sins, for example, then rebuke them for committing them, and believe that their faith will eventually drive them to refrain and repent of them.

Thinking ill of Muslims is to regard as evil, those acts and words of theirs which are in appearance good. For example, you may see a Muslim who frequently prays, gives charity, and recites the Qur'an, and you think that he is only doing this so that people may see him, and that his aim is wealth and social position. This corrupt form of thinking occurs only to those who are inwardly vile and is an attribute of the hypocrites.

As Allah the Exalted in describing them says,

الَّذِينَ يَلْمِزُونَ الْمُطَّوِّعِينَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي الصَّدَقَاتِ .

“Those who point disparagingly at such of the believers who willingly give charity.”¹ that is, they accuse them of ostentation.

And he may Allah's blessings, and peace be upon him, and his family said,

أَكْثَرُوا مِنْ ذَكَرَ اللَّهُ حَتَّى يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ : إِنَّكُمْ مُرَائُونَ .

“They invoke Allah so abundantly that the hypocrites say that you are ostentatious!”

It is incumbent upon you to make frequent supplications, and ask for forgiveness for yourself, your parents, relatives, friends, and all other Muslims, for the prayer of a Muslim for his brother in his absence is answered by Allah [*mustajab*].

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said,

دَعَوَاتٌ لَيْسَ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ اللَّهِ حِجَابٌ دَعْوَةُ الْمَظْلُومِ وَدَعْوَةُ الْمُسْلِمِ لِأَخِيهِ بِظَهْرِ الْعَيْبِ .

¹ Surah 9 At Taubah Verse 79.

“Some prayers have no veils between them and Allah: the prayer of those wronged, and that of a Muslim for his brother in his absence.”

And he may peace be upon him said,

إِذَا دَعَا الْمُسْلِمُ لِأَخِيهِ بَظَهْرِ الْعَيْبِ قَالَ الْمَلَكُ: آمِينَ، وَلَكَ بِمِثْلِهِ.

“When a Muslim prays for his brother in his absence the angel says, “Amen! And for you the same!” ”

Maymun ibn Mihran, may Allah have mercy on him, said, “Anyone who asks forgiveness for his parents after each obligatory prayer has thanked them as he was ordered to do following, He the Exalted commands,

“Thank Me and your two parents.”¹ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ.

It has been related that the one who asks forgiveness twenty-seven times a day for ‘the believing men and the believing women’ as follows,

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ. (٢٧)

will be among those whose prayers granted and through whom provision and rain have given, and these are the attributes of the saints.

You should know that Muslims have many mutual obligations upon each other. If you want to fulfil these properly then behave towards Muslims, whether they be present or absent, as you would like them to behave towards you. Oppose your soul and accustom your heart to wish for Muslims every good that you want for yourself and detest for them every evil that you hate for yourself.

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, and his family said,

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ.

“None of you has believed until he loves for his brother that which he loves for himself.”

And The Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him and his family, said,

¹ Surah 31 Luqman Verse 14.

الْمُسْلِمِ لِلْمُسْلِمِ كَالْبُنْيَانِ يَشُدُّ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا. وَكَالْجَسَدِ الْوَاحِدِ إِذَا اشْتَكَى مِنْهُ عُضْوٌ تَدَاعَى لَهُ سَائِرُ الْجَسَدِ بِالسَّهَرِ وَالْحُمَّى.

“Muslims are to one another as one building, each part of which supports the others, and as one body, which when one of its organs suffers the rest of the body suffers with it.”

And Yahya ibn Mu’adh, may Allah have mercy on him, said,

“If you cannot be of benefit to the Muslims, then, do not harm them;

if you cannot please them, then, do not abuse them;

if you cannot make them happy, then, do not make them sorrowful;

and if you cannot praise them, then, do not disparage them.”

My master Muhyid-Din Abdul Qadir al-Jailani may Allah be pleased with him, said, “Be with the Truth as if there were no creation, and be with creation as if you had no ego.”

And one of the Predecessors said, “People are either afflicted, or free of affliction so be compassionate to the afflicted.”

وَاشْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَى الْعَافِيَةِ.

“And so, thank Allah for freedom from affliction.”

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ.

“And praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the Worlds.”

Chapter Twenty-Seven

Repentance, Hope & Fear

You must repent of every single sin, small or great, outward or inward. For repentance is the first step that a servant takes on the Path to Allah, and is the foundation of all other stations, as ‘Allah loves the penitent.’

He, Exalted is He says,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ.

“For indeed, Allah loves those who turn to Him in repentance constantly, and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean.”¹

And Allah, Transcendent and Exalted is He, says,

وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ.

“Repent to Allah entirely, O believers, that you may succeed.”²

And the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, and his family and companions said,

التَّائِبُ مِنَ الذَّنْبِ كَمَنْ لَا ذَنْبَ لَهُ.

“The one who repents of sin is as he who has not sinned.”

You should know that repentance cannot be sound unless the person renounced his sin, felt remorse, and there is present a determination never to repeat it for the rest of one’s life. The true penitent is characterised by signs, among which are the softness of the

¹ Surah 2 Al Baqara Verse 222.

² Suran 24 An Noor Verse 31.

heart, frequent weeping, adhering to obedience, and forsaking evil companions and places.

You should beware of willful persistence, which is to sin and not repent immediately. A believer must guard himself against sins, both small and significant, in the way he would against burning fires, engulfing waters or lethal poisons. He should neither commit nor intend a sin, neither talk about it before nor delight in it after it has happened. If he does fall into it, he should conceal and hate it and hasten to repent immediately.

It is incumbent upon you to renew your repentance frequently, for sins are numerous, and a servant is never free, outwardly and inwardly, from a high number of rebellious acts, even if his state is good, behaviour upright, and obedience continual. It should suffice you to know that the Messenger of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him, infallible and perfect as he was, repented to Allah and asked for His forgiveness more than seventy times each day.

It is incumbent to ask for forgiveness repeatedly, night and day, especially in the last hours of the night. The Prophet may blessings and peace be upon him, and his family said,

مَنْ لَزِمَ الْإِسْتِعْفَارَ، جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُ مِنْ كُلِّ هَمٍّ فَرْجًا، وَمِنْ كُلِّ ضِيقٍ مَخْرَجًا،
وَرَزَقَهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ.

“Allah will grant the one who perseveres in asking for forgiveness relief from everything that worries him, a way out of every difficulty, and provision from beyond what he expect.”

So, recite abundantly,

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي، وَتُبْ عَلَيَّ، إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ.

“O Lord forgive me and relent toward me; truly, You are the One who relents and the Merciful!”

For indeed, the Companions used to hear the Messenger of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him, utter this blessed invocation almost a hundred times in a single gathering.

It is incumbent upon you to invoke the prayer of *Dhu'n-Nun* may peace be upon him, لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ
 “There is no Allah, but You, Transcendent are You! Indeed, I was one of those who wrong themselves.”¹

For it has been related that it contains Allah’s Supreme Name and that if anyone who is worried or aggrieved and repeats it, but that Allah grants him relief. Allah the Exalted says,

فَأَسْتَجِبْنَا لَهُ وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْغَمِّ وَكَذَلِكَ نُنَجِّي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ.

“We answered him and rescued him from grief, and in such wise do We rescue the believer.”²

It is incumbent to have hope and fear, for these are two of the noblest fruits of faith, and Allah has attributed them to the Foremost among His servants.

For He is the Most Truthful Speaker says,

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ يَبْتَغُونَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمُ الْوَسِيلَةَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ وَيَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَهُ وَيَخَافُونَ عَذَابَهُ. إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ كَانَ مَحْذُورًا.

“Those whom they call upon do desire (for themselves) means of access to their Lord, - even those who are nearest: they hope for His Mercy and fear His Wrath: for the Wrath of thy Lord is something to take heed of.”³

And the Messenger of Allah, may blessings and peace be upon him and his family said,

قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: أَنَا عِنْدَ ظَنِّ عَبْدِي بِي فَلْيُظَنَّ بِي مَا يَشَاءُ.

“Allah, the Exalted says, “I am as My servant thinks Me to be, let him then think of Me what he will.”

And upon him be blessings and peace, also said,

¹ Surah 21 Al Anbiyaa Verse 87.

² Surah 21 Al Anbiyaa Verse 88.

³ Surah 17 Al Israa’ Verse 57.

قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: وَعِزَّتِي لَا أَجْمَعُ عَلَى عَبْدِي أَمْنَيْنِ وَلَا خَوْفَيْنِ إِنْ هُوَ أَمِنَنِي فِي الدُّنْيَا
أَخَفْتُهُ يَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ عِبَادِي، وَإِنْ هُوَ خَافَنِي فِي الدُّنْيَا أَمَنْتُهُ يَوْمَ أَجْمَعُ عِبَادِي.

“Allah the Exalted said, “By My Might and Majesty, I shall not unite two safeties or two fears in My servant. If he feels safe from Me in the world, I shall make him fear on the day I resurrect My servants, but if he fears Me in the world, I shall make him secure the day I gather them together.”

The basis of hope is the heart’s knowledge of the immensity of Allah’s mercy and generosity, the magnitude of His favours and kindness, and His gracious promise to those who obey Him. This knowledge generates a state of joyous relief which is termed ‘hope’, the intended result of which is that one hastens to acts of goodness and is careful in the performance of one’s acts of obedience, for obedience is the road to Allah’s Good Pleasure [*Ridwan*], and His Garden.

The basis of fear is the heart’s knowledge of the majesty of Allah, His invincible might, His independence of any of His creatures, and the severe punishments and painful torments with which He has threatened those who disobey Him and contravene His commands. This knowledge generates a state of apprehension which is termed ‘fear’, the intended result of which is that one abandons sins and thoroughly guards oneself against them, for sin is the road leading to Allah’s wrath and His place of punishment.

Any hope which does not lead to adherence to obedience and fear which did not lead to the renunciation of transgressions is considered by the people of inward vision to be useless illusion and folly, for the one who hopes for something seeks it, and the one who fears something flees from it invariably.

Three Kinds of Repentance

You should know that people are in this respect of three kinds. Firstly, there is the servant who has committed himself to Allah, feels secure with Him, and the darkness of whose passions have disappeared with the dawning of the lights of His nearness, so that his only remaining pleasure is to commune with Him, and his only remaining

repose to deal with Him. His hope will thus have become yearning and love, and his fear reverence and awe.

Secondly, there is a servant who does not feel safe from the neglect of obligations and the inclination towards forbidden things. For him, fear and hope should be in equilibrium, just like the wings of a bird. There is a narration [*Hadith*] that state

لَوْ وُزِنَ خَوْفُ الْمُؤْمِنِ وَرَجَاؤُهُ لَأَعْتَدَلَا.

“Should the fear of a believer and his hope be weighed, they should be found equal.”

Most believers are in this state.

Thirdly, there is a servant who is overcome by confusion and heedlessness. For this person, what is appropriate is constant fear to prevent from committing sins, and this applies at all times saving that of his death when hope should predominate, for he, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

لَا يَمُوتَنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ إِلَّا وَهُوَ يُحْسِنُ الظَّنَّ بِاللَّهِ.

“Let none of you dies without thinking well of Allah.”

It is incumbent upon you that when you speak of hope with the ordinary people, you must confine yourself to conditional hope, that is, you must mention the beautiful promises and abundant rewards dependent on doing good and avoiding sins.

You should beware of speaking to them of absolute hope, by saying, for example, “The servant sins and the Lord forgives.” And “Were it not for sins the clemency and forbearance of Allah would not have become manifest.” And “The sins of the ancients and the moderns are but a drop in a fathomless sea compared with the immensity of Allah’s mercy,” and other similar things. Such words are real but harmful to the ordinary people, who may be induced to transgress, and you would have been the cause. Not every truth is to be uttered, for there are men appropriate to each degree.

You must beware of either despairing of Allah’s mercy or feeling secure from His deception, for both are among the major sins.

Allah the Exalted says,

وَمَنْ يَفْطَظْ مِنْ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّهِ إِلَّا الضَّالُّونَ.

“And who despairs of the mercy of his Lord, but such as go astray?”¹

فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ.

“But no one can feel secure from the Plan of Allah, except those (doomed) to ruin!”²

‘Despair’ is to be so overwhelmed by fear as to leave absolutely no room for hope.

While ‘security’ is one who experiences to have so much hope such that it leaves absolutely no room for fear.

The man who has either of the two is ignorant of Allah and will inevitably neglect His obedience and transgress. For the one who despairs forsakes obedience because he feels it will be of no avail to him, while the secure person commits sins, thinking that they will not harm him. We seek Allah’s protection against damnation and evil destiny.

You should beware of those hopes for forgiveness which will sever you from that state. These you hear from some deluded people who quote,

“Indeed, Allah forgives all sins.”³ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا.

And that He stands in no need of us and our works, that His treasures are full of bounty and His mercy envelops everything, but who then persist in committing sins and neglecting good works, as though they were in effect saying that acts of obedience are of no benefit and sins bring no harm, and is a ‘formidable falsehood!’

Allah the Exalted says,

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ. وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ.

¹ Surah 15 Al Hijr Verse 56.

² Surah 7 Al Araaf Verse 99.

³ Surah 39 Az Zumar Verse 53.

“Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good, see it!
And anyone who has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it.”¹

And Allah the Exalted says,

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسَاءُوا بِمَا عَمِلُوا وَيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ
أَحْسَنُوا بِالْحُسْنَى.

“And to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth: so that
He rewards those who do evil, according to their deeds, and He
rewards those who do good, with what is best.”²

And the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace
be upon him, said,

الْكَيْسُ مَنْ دَانَ نَفْسَهُ وَعَمِلَ لِمَا بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ، وَالْعَاجِزُ مَنْ أَتْبَعَ نَفْسَهُ هَوَاهَا،
وَتَمَيَّ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْأَمَائِيَّ.

“The shrewd man is he who accuses himself and works for that which
follows death, and the incompetent is he who follows his soul's
passions and harbours illusory hopes regarding Allah.”

If you say to one of these deluded people that he should refrain
from earning and commerce, then Allah the Exalted will send him his
provision, he will ridicule you and reply that he never saw anything
come except when sought and pursued, mostly with toil and exertion.
Nevertheless, Allah has guaranteed his share of the world for him, but
not the hereafter. Is this anything but an inversion of the truth and
standing upside down on one's head?

Al-Hasan al-Basri, may Allah have mercy on him, said,
“Hopes for forgiveness have deceived some people until they left the
world as bankrupts,” that is, devoid of good works.

And he, may Allah have mercy on him also said, “The believer
conjoins excellent behaviour with fear, while the hypocrite conjoins
despicable acts with security; for the believer wakes up apprehensive

¹ Surah 99 Az Zalzalah Verse 7-8.

² Surah 53 An Najm Verse 31.

and ends his day apprehensive; he works and says, “I shall not be saved, I shall not be saved,” and the hypocrite abandons work and says, “Most people are like this, I will be forgiven.”

The Prophets and the saints, perfect as they were in their knowledge of Allah, their good opinions of Him, good works, and scarcity or total lack of sins, were nonetheless exceedingly fearful and apprehensive.

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ،

“They are those whom Allah has guided,

فَإِطِيعُوا هُدَاهُمْ أَقْبَلِهِ.

so follow their guidance.”¹

¹ Surah 6 Al An’aam Verse 90.

Chapter Twenty-Eight

Patience

You must show patience for it is one of this matter's foundations and is inescapable as long as you are in this abode. It is a noble trait and a great virtue. Allah the Exalted says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ.

“O you who believe! seek help with patient perseverance and prayer; for indeed Allah is with those who patiently persevere.”¹

And Allah the Exalted says,

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا.

“And We appointed, from among them, leaders, giving guidance under Our command, so long as they persevered with patience.”²

Allah the Exalted also says,

إِنَّمَا يُوفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ.

“Indeed, for those who patiently persevere will truly receive a reward without measure!”³

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said,

¹ Surah 2 Al Baqara Verse 153.

² Surah 32 As Sajdah Verse 24.

³ Surah 39 Az Zumar Verse 10.

الصَّبْرُ أَمِيرُ جُنُودِ الْمُؤْمِنِ.

“Fortitude is the commander of the believer’s soldiers.”

And he, may blessings and peace be upon him said,

فِي الصَّبْرِ عَلَى مَا تَكَرَّرَ خَيْرٌ كَثِيرًا.

“There is much good in the patience of that which one finds unpleasant.”

And in his advice to Ibn ‘Abbas, may Allah be pleased with both of them, may blessings and peace be upon him said,

وَأَعْلَمْ أَنَّ النَّصْرَ مَعَ الصَّبْرِ وَأَنَّ الْفَرْجَ مَعَ الْكَرْبِ وَأَنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا.

“You should know that victory comes with a persevering patience, relief with hardship, and that with each difficulty comes ease.”

You should know that happiness depends on the occurrence of nearness to Allah, which in turn depends on always following the truth and avoiding falsehood. The soul is by its very nature inclined to detest reality and lean towards falsehood. The determination of the seeker of felicity is thus always in need of resilience, sometimes to force the soul to follow the truth and sometimes to force it to avoid falsehood.

Patience is of four categories.

Firstly, patiently enduring one’s perseverance in acts of obedience and this is realised inwardly through sincerity and presence of the heart, and outwardly through always holding to them, showing zeal, and performing them correctly and lawfully. By remembering Allah’s promised rewards, both immediate and in the future help this kind of patience by instilling obedience. The man who keeps to this kind of endurance reaches the station of nearness, where he will find indescribable sweetness, pleasure, and intimacy in acts of obedience. The one to whom this happens must not rely on it in preference to Allah.

Secondly, patient endurance in renouncing sins, and this is realised outwardly by avoiding them and by keeping away from the places where they might be committed, and by preventing the soul

from discoursing upon them and from inclining to them, for the very beginning of sin is a thought. As for remembering previous sins, if this results in fear or remorse, it is okay if not then refraining from it is better. This kind of endurance is helped by remembering Allah's threats of punishment in this world and the next for disobedience. Allah will honour the one who keeps to this kind of patience with finding all disobedience so repugnant that entering the Fire would be easier for him to bear than the committal of the smallest sin.

Thirdly, patient endurance of unpleasant things. These are of two kinds. The first comprises those that come from Allah without an intermediary, for example, illness, infirmity, loss of wealth or the death of dear relatives or friends. This kind of patience is realised inwardly by forsaking restlessness, which is to become annoyed and irritated, and outwardly by not complaining to any creature and this is not incompatible with describing an illness to a physician, or with one's eyes overflowing with tears at a time of loss; but it is, however, inconsistent with slapping one's cheeks, rending one's clothes, wailing, and such acts.

Having the knowledge that impatience is painful in itself help this kind of patience, in addition to its leading to punishment and the loss of reward. Complaining to one who can neither benefit nor protect his self is foolish, and such are all creatures. Furthermore, to complain is evidence of not finding one's sufficiency in Allah, in Whose Hand is the Dominion of all things, and also of omitting to remember those verses which relate to the worth of patient endurance of losses, infirmities, and afflictions, and that Allah the Exalted knows better than a man that which is of most benefit to him. He, Exalted is He says, وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ، وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ. الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ. أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ، وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ.

“Be sure we shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere, then who say, when afflicted with

calamity, “To Allah We belong, and to Him is our return.” They are those on whom descend blessings from Allah and Mercy, and they are the ones that receive guidance.”¹

Allah will give the one who perseveres in this kind of patience to taste the sweetness of surrender and find rest in the serenity of contentment [*rida*]. Allah, the Exalted willing, we will mention contentment, in due course.

The second kind of unpleasant things comprises those which are caused by other men, whether by way of offences to oneself and one’s honour or of some act of withholding.

Complete patience in this regard means preventing oneself from hating the offender, if he is a Muslim or wishing him to come to harm, restricting one’s tongue from praying to Allah against him, and not blaming him at all, which thing should be accomplished either by forbearance and patience through one’s reliance on Allah’s assistance or by reconciliation, in the wish for His reward.

This kind of patience is helped by knowledge of that which has been handed down regarding the merit which is in suppressing one’s anger, enduring injuries and forgiving others. Allah the Exalted says,

فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ.

“But if a person forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allah: for Allah loveth not those who do wrong.”²

Allah the Exalted says,

وَلَمَنْ صَبَرَ وَغَفَرَ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ لَمِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ.

“But indeed, if any show patience and forgive, that would truly be an exercise of courageous will and resolution in the conduct of affairs.”³

He, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

مَنْ كَظَمَ غَيْظًا وَلَوْ شَاءَ أَنْ يُنْفِذَهُ لَنُفِذَهُ مَلَأَ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ أَمْنًا وَإِيمَانًا.

¹ Surah 2 Al Baqara Verses 155-157.

² Surah 42 Ash Shuraa Verse 40.

³ Surah 42 Ash Shuraa Verse 43.

“Allah fills the heart of the one who suppresses his anger when able to carry out its demands with serenity and faith.”

And he, may peace be upon him, said,

يُنَادِي مُنَادٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ لِيَقُمْ مَنْ أَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَيَقُومَ الْعَافُونَ عَنِ النَّاسِ.

“A herald will call on the Day of Rising: “Let those whose reward must be granted by Allah arise!” and there shall arise those men who were forgiving of others.”

Allah honoured the person who perseveres in this kind of patient with a goodly character, which is the source of all virtues and the foundation of all perfections.

He, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him and his family said,

لَا شَيْءٌ أَثْقَلُ فِي الْمِيزَانِ مِنْ حُسْنِ الْخُلُقِ وَإِنَّ الْعَبْدَ لَيَبْلُغُ بِحُسْنِ خُلُقِهِ دَرَجَةً صَاحِبِ الصَّلَاةِ وَالصِّيَامِ.

“Nothing shall weigh more heavily in the Balance than a goodly character; a servant may attain through his goodly character the rank of the one who frequently prays and fasts.”

And he, may peace be upon him said,

أَحَبُّكُمْ إِلَيَّ وَأَقْرَبُكُمْ مِنِّي مَجْلِسًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَحْسَنُكُمْ خُلُقًا.

“The ones I shall love most and who will sit the closest to me on the Day of Rising are those among you who are the best in character.”

Ibn al-Mubarak, may Allah have mercy on him, said, “Good character is to have an engaging face, to be generous with good works, and to refrain from harming.”

And the Imam al-Ghazali, may Allah spread his benefit, said, “Good character is a disposition deeply ingrained in the soul from which beautiful acts spring easily.”

Fourthly, patient renunciation of desires, which are all those boastfully worldly things to which the soul inclines. Complete patient denial is attained by inwardly stopping the soul from thinking and

leaning towards them, and outwardly restraining it from seeking or coming close to them. This kind of fortitude is helped by knowledge of the distraction from Allah and His worship which comes from seeking and fulfilling desires, the risks of falling into the suspect and prohibited things and the arousal of greed for the world and the wish to remain therein to be able to enjoy its pleasures. Abu Sulayman al-Darani, may Allah mercy be upon him said, “To abandon a single desire is of more benefit to the heart than a year’s worship.” Allah will honour the one who grows accustomed to denying himself his desires by removing the love of these things from his heart until he attains the state described by a certain gnostic, who said, “I desire that I should not desire, so that I may abandon that which I do not desire, and thus not be deprived of that which I desire.”

وَبِاللّٰهِ التَّوْفِيقُ.

“Providential success is from Allah!”

Chapter Twenty-Nine

Gratitude

You must thank Allah for all that He has favoured you. You have nothing good, whether outward or inward, religious or worldly, but that it comes from Him. He the Exalted said,

وَمَا بِكُمْ مِّن نِّعْمَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ.

“Whatever good thing you have is from Allah.”¹

Allah’s favours upon you are more than you can count or be aware of, let alone thank Him adequately.

وَأِنْ تَعَدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا.

“If you would count the favours of Allah, you cannot number them.”²

If the poor and sick among the people of Monotheism reflected on Allah’s favours upon them, they would become too intoxicated by giving thanks to feeling the hardship of patient endurance. You should do as much as you can to thank your Lord and confess your total incapacity to do so adequately.

You should know that thankfulness leads to the perpetuation of favours already received and to the obtaining of other desirable wishes.

Allah the Exalted says,

¹ Surah 16 An Nahl Verse 53.

² Surah 14 Ibrahim Verse 34.

لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ.

“If you are grateful, I will add more favours to you.”¹

He is, Exalted is He, too Generous to take away favour from someone who is thanking Him.

He, Exalted is He says,

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يَكُ مُعَيِّرًا نِعْمَةً أَنْعَمَهَا عَلَى قَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُعَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ.

“That is because Allah will never change the grace which He has bestowed on a people until they change what is in their selves.”²

That is, their neglecting to give thanks. And Allah has exhorted His servants to express gratefulness to Him many times in His Book.

Allah, Exalted is He, says,

كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ.

“Eat of the good things that We have provided for you, and be grateful to Allah, if indeed, it is Him who you worship.”³

He Exalted is He, says,

كُلُوا مِنْ رِزْقِ رَبِّكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لَهُ.

“Eat of the Sustenance provided by your Lord and be grateful to Him.”⁴

And he, may blessings and peace be upon him, said,

لِيَتَّخِذَ أَحَدُكُمْ لِسَانًا ذَاكِرًا، وَقَلْبًا شَاكِرًا.

“Let each of you have an invoking tongue and a thankful heart.”

And he may peace be upon him said,

الْإِيمَانُ نِصْفَانِ: نِصْفٌ صَبْرٌ وَنِصْفٌ شُكْرٌ.

“Faith has two halves: one is patience and the other thankfulness.”

¹ Surah 14 Ibrahim Verse 7.

² Surah 8 Al Anfaal Verse 53.

³ Surah 2 Al Baqara Verse 172.

⁴ Surah 34 Saba Verse 15.

You should know that just as you must thank Allah for favours which are proper to you, such as knowledge and health, you must also thank Him for general favours, such as the sending of Messengers, the revelation of Books, raising the sky, and stretching out the earth.

The basis of thankfulness is that the heart is aware of such favours, that they are from Allah alone, and that nothing comes to one through one's ability and power, but only through Allah's grace and mercy. The limit of thankfulness is to use each one of His favours in His obedience; if you do not do so you will have neglected to give thanks for it, and if you use them to disobey Him you will have fallen into ingratitude, whereby favours turn into afflictions. Anyone who still enjoys some favours while using them in disobedience to Allah is being lured.

Allah the Exalted says, سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ.
 “We shall gradually visit with punishment, in ways they perceive not.”¹

Allah the Exalted also says, إِنَّمَا نُمِلِّي لَهُمْ لِيَزْدَادُوا إِثْمًا.
 “We grant them respite that they may grow in sinfulness or iniquity.”²

Similarly, there is a narration [*Hadith*] that stated, إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُمِلِّي لِلظَّالِمِ حَتَّى إِذَا أَخَذَهُ لَمْ يُفْلِتْهُ.
 “Allah gives respite to the wrongdoer until, when He takes him, He does not let him go.”

It is part of thankfulness to praise Allah frequently and to rejoice for the favours bestowed, because they are the means of attaining to the closeness of Allah, and because they are evidence of Allah's solicitude for His servant.

It is part of thankfulness, too, to make much of His favours, even those that are small. It is related that Allah once said to one of His Prophets, “Whensoever I grant you a poor grain of wheat, know that I have remembered you thereby; therefore, thank Me for it.”

¹ Surah 7 Al Araaf Verse 182.

² Surah 3 Ala Imran Verse 178.

It is part of thankfulness likewise to speak of Allah's favours without, however, digressing into anything that might suggest self-righteousness in religious matters or insolence in issues of the world. Deeds are according to the intentions behind them. And all good comes from following our virtuous predecessors in all circumstances.

وَاللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى اَعْلَمُ.

And Allah the Exalted knows best.

Chapter Thirty

Renunciation [*zuhud*]

You must renounce the world, for renunciation [*zuhud*] is the forerunner of felicity, the manifestation of Providence, and the sign of sanctity. Just as loving the world is the origin of all sins, so also is hating it the root of all obedience and excellence. It is enough to make you renounce the world to know that in numerous passages in His Book Allah has called it the “Comfort of Illusion”¹ and that Al-Hasan, may Allah have mercy on him, said, “It is as the greenness of vegetation and the little girls’ dolls.” And Abu Talib al-Makki, may Allah have mercy on him, said, “The Comfort of Illusion is a name for a putrefying carcass.” And Allah, the Exalted, defined the world as being but a distraction and play to which no intelligent person should pay any attention and to which only ignorant fools are attracted.

وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ.

“The life of the world is nothing but play and amusement.”²

You should know that to renounce the world is an immediate felicity, and that only those whose breasts Allah has opened up by the dawning of the lights of gnosis and certainty are capable of it.

The Prophet has said, may blessings and peace be upon him,

¹ Surah 3 Ala Imran Verse 185 and Surah 57 Al Hadid Verse 20:

For the life of this world if but a comfort of illusion - وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ

Surah 4 An Nisaa Verse 77: Short is the enjoyment of this world - مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ

² Surah 6 Al Anám Verse 32.

إِنَّ النُّورَ إِذَا دَخَلَ الْقَلْبَ انْفَسَحَ لَهُ وَانْشَرَحَ.

“When light enters the heart, it opens up and is enlarged.”

The Companions then asked, “Is there any sign for that?” and he, may blessings and peace be upon him, replied,

نَعَمْ ، التَّجَافِي عَنْ دَارِ الْغُرُورِ ، وَالْإِنَابَةُ إِلَى دَارِ الْخُلُودِ.

“Yes, to shun the home of illusion and attend to the home of immortality.”

He, may Allah’s blessings be upon him and his family, said,

الرُّهَادَةُ فِي الدُّنْيَا تَرِيحُ الْقَلْبَ وَالْبَدَنَ وَالرَّغْبَةُ فِي الدُّنْيَا تَكْثُرُ الْهَمَّ وَالْحَزْنَ.

“Renouncing (or abstaining) the world relieves the heart and the body, while the desire for the world increases worry and sorrow.”

And he, may blessings and peace be upon him said,

أَرْهَدُ فِي الدُّنْيَا يُحِبَّكَ اللَّهُ ، وَأَرْهَدُ فِيمَا عِنْدَ النَّاسِ يُحِبُّكَ النَّاسُ.

“If you renounce the world, and Allah will love you and if what belongs to human beings, then they will love you.”

The origin of renunciation is the heart’s knowledge of the vileness and insignificance of the world. That ‘had it been worth so much as a fly’s wing to Allah He would not have given a disbeliever a sip of its water” and that “it is accursed and all that it contains except that which is for Allah”; and that anyone who takes more than is necessary from it is unwittingly taking his destruction.

The intended result of such knowledge is to abandon inwardly desire for the world and to leave outwardly delighting in its pleasures.

The lowest degree of renunciation is that one is not induced by the world to commit a sin, nor to neglect any act of obedience, while the highest degree is that you take nothing from this world unless you know that to take worldly matters is more pleasing to Allah than to leave it. There are many degrees between these two.

Sincere renunciation or asceticism has many marks.

Among these is that one does not rejoice for what one has nor mourn for what one has not and that the pursuit and enjoyment of the world do not distract one from that which is better for one in the sight of his Lord.

It is incumbent that you remove the love of dinars and dirhams (wealth and properties of this world) from your heart until they become as pebbles and sand in your eyes. Remove the wish to be thought highly of by people from your heart until you are indifferent to people's praise and condemnation, and to whether they are attracted or repulsed by you. The love of prominence is more harmful than that of money, and both indicate a desire for the world.

The basis of the love of prominence is to love being considered significant by others. Now greatness is one of Allah's attributes, and this thing is, therefore, disputing His Lordship.

The basis of the love of money is the love of enjoying one's lower desires [*shahwat*], and this is an attribute of animals. He, may blessings and peace be upon him, said

قَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ، الْعِظَمَةُ إِزَارِي وَالْكِبْرِيَاءُ رِدَائِي فَمَنْ نَازَعَنِي وَاحِدًا مِنْهُمَا قَذَفْتُهُ فِي النَّارِ جَهَنَّمَ.

“Allah the Exalted says, “Greatness is My lower garment and Pride My upper garment. I shall cast anyone who disputes with Me about either of them into the deep fire of Hell.”

And he may blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَا ذُئِبَانٍ جَائِعَانِ أُرْسِلَا فِي زَرْيَبَةٍ غَنَمٍ، بِأَفْسَدَ لَهَا مِنْ حُبِّ الشَّرَفِ وَالْمَالِ فِي دِينِ الرَّجُلِ الْمُسْلِمِ.

“Two hungry wolves let loose into the sheep's fold will not devastate it more than the love of prominence and wealth in the religion of a Muslim man.”

It is incumbent upon you to always take little from the world, and confine yourself to your needs, whether it be in the matter of clothes, food, marriage, housing, or any other comfort.

You should beware of indulgently seeking its pleasures while claiming to renounce it, using arguments unacceptable to Allah, the Exalted, and contriving interpretations which far removed from the truth. How the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, and the Prophets before him, and the leaders after him, shunned the world's pleasures while able to enjoy them licitly is quite apparent to anyone who has the least knowledge. If you are incapable of renouncing the world and you admit your desire for it, you are not to blame; you will only have sinned if you pursue and enjoy it in a manner forbidden by the Law. Renunciation is a degree higher than this.

Would that I knew, even had Allah the Exalted made it obligatory on us to take liberally from the world, where we would have found the ability to do so at a time when it has become arduous to find even a halal garment with which to cover oneself decently, and enough halal food to alleviate one's hunger?

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ.

“To Allah, we belong, and to Him is our return.”

Chapter Thirty-One

Reliance on Allah [*Tawakkal*]

It is incumbent upon you to rely on Allah, for He suffices, enriches, and concerns Himself with those who do so.

وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ.

“if anyone puts his trust in Allah, sufficient is Allah for him.”¹

Reliance [*Tawakkal*] is one of the fruits of a sincere Monotheism which is well established and has prevailed in the heart.

Allah, the Exalted says,

رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَاتَّخِذْهُ وَكِيلًا.

“He is the Lord of the East and the West: there is no god but He, so take Him therefore for your Disposer of Affairs.”²

Do take notice how He began by affirming Lordship, and then the exclusive Oneness of Divinity, and then ordered us to rely on Him, Majestic and High is He! so that no man has any excuse to forsake this. And He has commanded His servants to rely on Him and encouraged them to do so in His saying,

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ.

“And in Allah should the faithful, ever, put their trust.”³

¹ Surah At Talaq Verse 3.

² Surah 9 Al Muzammil Verse .

³ Surah 3 Ala Imran Verse 122.

And in the saying of the Exalted,

فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ. إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ.

“Then put your trust in Allah. For Allah loves those who put their trust in Him.”¹

And the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, and his family said,

لَوْ تَوَكَّلْتُمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ حَقَّ تَوَكُّلِهِ لَرَزَقَكُمْ كَمَا يُرْزَقُ الطَّيْرُ تَغْدُو خِمَاصًا وَتُرْجِعُ بَطَانًا.

“Were you to rely on Allah as He rightly should be relied on, He would provide for you as He provides for the birds which go off hungry in the morning and return full in the evening.”

You should know that the basis of reliance on Allah is the heart’s knowledge that all matters are in Allah’s Hand. Whether beneficial or harmful, unpleasant or pleasant and that for all creatures to unite to be of benefit to someone, they would benefit him only in the way which Allah has already written for him; and that if they were to unite to harm him, they would do so only in that which Allah has already written for him.

It is a condition for sound reliance that it does not lead you to disobey Allah, and that you avoid what He has forbidden and performed what He has commanded, relying in all this on Him, seeking only His assistance and committing yourself to Him.

Using any of the world’s means does not invalidate your reliance as long as you rely on Allah and not on that which you use.

Indeed, for the one whose reliance is sincere, his use of worldly means will become meagre. As for totally divesting oneself of them, this is praiseworthy only for those whose approach to Allah is uninterrupted, whose hearts purified from attending to anything other than Him, and who do not by so doing cause those of Allah’s creatures whom they support to be lost. The Messenger of Allah may Allah’s blessings, and peace be upon him, and his family said,

¹ Surah 3 Ala Imran Verse 159.

كَفَى بِالْمَرْءِ إِثْمًا أَنْ يُضَيِّعَ مَنْ يَعْوُلُ.

“It is sufficient sin for a man that he should cause those whom he supports to be lost.”

You should know that storing things and the treatment of illnesses do not compromise the essence of reliance for those who understand that the One Who enriches, benefits, and harms is Allah alone. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, stored things for those in his charge to demonstrate that it was allowable; as for himself, he never stored anything for the morrow; and if someone else saved something for him, he forbade him as soon as he came to know of it. When he may blessings and peace be upon him was asked, about the seventy thousand from his nation who would enter the Garden without first being judged, he said,

هُمْ الَّذِينَ لَا يَسْتَرْقُونَ وَلَا يَكْتُمُونَ وَلَا يَتَطَيَّرُونَ وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ.

“They are those who have no recourse to charms or cauterisation¹ or necromancy², and put their trust upon their Lord.”

The one whose reliance is sincere has three marks. The first is that he neither has hopes in nor fears other than Allah. The sign of this is that he upholds the truth in the presence of those in whose regard people usually have hope or fear, such as princes and rulers. The second is that worrying about his sustenance never enters his heart, because of his confidence in Allah’s guarantee, so that his heart is as tranquil when in need as when his requirement has been fulfilled, or even more.

The third is that his heart does not become disturbed in fearful situations, knowing that that which has missed him could never have struck him, and that which has struck him could never have missed him.

¹ Cauterization is a medical practice or technique of burning a part of a body to remove or close off a part of it or basically mutilating the body parts, a fitrah from Allah.

² Necromancy is the supposed practice of communicating with the dead, especially in order to predict the future or any other magic practices, witchcraft, sorcery, or black magic in general.

An example of this was an incident related to my lord 'Abdal-Qadir al-Jalani, may Allah spread his benefit. He was once discoursing on Destiny when a great cobra fell on him so that his audience panicked. The cobra coiled itself around the shaykh's neck, then entered one of his sleeves and came out from the other while he remained firm and undisturbed and did not interrupt his discourse.

Another sheikh who was once thrown into a lion's den to be eaten yet came to no harm was asked, "What were you thinking about when thrown to the lion?" He replied, "On the legal ruling concerning lion leftovers [*najis*]¹."

حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ،

"For us Allah suffice,

وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ.

And He is the best disposer of affairs."

¹ The sheikh focused was on religious ruling and not fear of the lion!

Chapter Thirty-Two

Divine Love

It is incumbent that you must love Allah until He, Transcendent is He! becomes dearer to you than all else, and until you have no other beloved but Him. The cause for the presence of love is either a perfection existing in the beloved or something that one receives from him. If you are one in love because of perfection, then know that perfection, majesty and beauty are Allah's alone and that He has no associates in them. Any perfection or beauty seen in any real thing comes from Allah's perfecting or beautifying it. He has created and designed the subject, and had He not favoured it with existence it would have been unperceived, non-existent; and had it not been for the outpouring of the lights of the beauty of His making upon it, the subject concerned would have been a thing inauspicious indeed.

If, however, you are one who loves because of what you receive, then know that there is no graciousness, favour, honour, or provision bestowed upon you or any other creature but that Allah the Exalted has favoured you with it purely through His generosity and liberality. How many a good thing has He given you! How many favours Allah has granted you! He is your Lord and Guardian, Who created and guided you, to whom your life and your death belong, Who gives you to eat and drink, Who provides and looks after you, Who shelters you and gives you refuge. Allah sees your ugly behaviour and conceals it; you ask Him to forgive you, and Allah does so. Allah sees your righteous behaviour and increases and manifests it. You obey

Him by His providence and aid, and He mentions your name in the Unseen and casts respect and love for you into the hearts of others. You disobey Him using His favours, yet disobedience does not make Him withhold His favours. How can you love other than this Generous Allah? Or how could you disobey this Compassionate Lord?

You should know that the basis of love is knowledge and that its fruit is contemplation. It is the lowest degree that the love of Allah should be supreme in your heart, and the test of sincerity here is to disobey the person whom you love should he invite you to that which would incur Allah's anger such as sins or the neglect of acts of obedience. Its uppermost degree is that there remain in your heart, not the slightest love for other than Allah, is a rare and precious thing, and to persist therein is even more so. When it continues, the human attributes fade away completely, and absorption in Allah obtains, which leaves no room for any awareness of the existent universe and its people.

You should know that love for the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, and all of Allah's other Prophets, angels, and virtuous servants and all who assist in His obedience, is part of one's love for Him, the Exalted. The Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said,

أَحِبُّوا اللَّهَ لِمَا يَغْدُوكُمْ بِهِ مِنْ نِعَمِهِ، وَأَحِبُّونِي بِحُبِّ اللَّهِ، وَأَحِبُّوا أَهْلَ بَيْتِي بِحُبِّي.

“Love Allah for the favours He grants you, and love me for the love of Allah, and love the people of my house for my love.”

And he may blessings and peace be upon him said,

قال الله عزَّ وجلَّ: وَجَبَتْ مُحِبَّتِي لِمُتَحَابِّينَ فِيَّ، وَالْمُتَجَالِسِينَ فِيَّ، وَالْمُتَزَاوِرِينَ فِيَّ، وَالْمُتَبَاذِلِينَ فِيَّ.

“Allah, High and Almighty is He, says, “My love is due to those who love each other for My sake, who sit with each other for My sake, who visit each other for My sake, and who give to each other for My sake.”

Sincere love has character, the greatest and highest of which is perfection in one's following the Messenger, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, in his speech, acts, manners and attributes.

Allah the Exalted says,

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ.

“Say, If you love Allah, then follow me and Allah will love you.”¹

Following Allah's Beloved is in proportion to one's love for Allah; if the latter is abundant, then the former will be abundant likewise, while if the latter is little, the former will be little also.

وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَا نَقُولُ وَكِيلٌ.

“And Allah is witness to what we say”².

¹ Surah 3 Ala Imran Verse 31.

² Surah 28 Al Qasas Verse 28.

Chapter Thirty-Three

Contentment

It is incumbent upon you must be content with Allah's decrees, for this contentment is among the noblest consequences of love and gnosis [*arif*]. It is the attribute of the lover to be pleased with the acts of his Beloved, whether they be sweet or bitter. May Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, and his family once said,

مَنْ لَمْ يَرْضَ بِقَضَائِي وَلَمْ يَصْبِرْ عَلَى بَلَائِي فَلْيَلْتَمِسْ رَبًّا سِوَائِي.

“That Allah say, “Anyone who is not content with My decrees and cannot patiently endure My trials, let him seek a lord other than I!” ”

And he, upon him be blessings and peace, said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ إِذَا أَحَبَّ قَوْمًا ابْتَلَاهُمْ فَمَنْ رَضِيَ فَلَهُ الرِّضَا وَمَنْ سَخِطَ فَلَهُ السُّخْطُ.

“When Allah loves a people He afflicts them, the one who is content receives His contentment, and the one who is angry receives His anger.”

Your duty, O believer, is to know and believe that Allah the Exalted is the One Who causes guidance and misguidance, misery and happiness, and nearness and remoteness; He gives and withholds, humbles and exalts, and causes harm and benefit. After having known and believed in this, you must never object whether outwardly or inwardly, to any of Allah's acts.

To object means to say,

“Why was that?”

“What for?”

“Why was it not like this or that?”

“What did so-and-so do to deserve this?”

There can be none more ignorant than he who raises objections to the way Allah deals with His kingdom or disputes His sovereignty, while remaining aware that Allah the Exalted is the Unique Creator, Authority, Sovereign, and Manager, Who does what He wills and decides what He wishes.

لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْأَلُونَ.

“He cannot be questioned for His acts, but they (His creatures) will be questioned for theirs.”¹

On the contrary, you must believe that everything that Allah, the Exalted, does cannot be done in a wiser, more equitable, better, or more perfect way.

Such is, in general terms, contentment with Allah’s acts. To be more specific, matters which concern you are of two kinds. Firstly, those which suit you, such as good health and prosperity. Resentment is inconceivable here except through looking at those who possess more of these things than you do; your duty then is to be content with what Allah has allotted you. After all, He has the right to do as He pleases in His kingdom, or better still because He has chosen what is best and most suitable for your circumstances. Secondly, that which does not suit you, such as misfortunes, illnesses, and infirmities. It is then forbidden that you be dissatisfied and restless in this regard; it is better to accept these things contentedly and surrender to Allah’s. If you cannot, then patiently endure for the sake of Allah. The Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

أَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ فِي الرِّضَا فَإِنْ لَمْ تَسْتَطِعْ فَفِي الصَّبْرِ عَلَى مَا تَكْرَهُ خَيْرٌ كَثِيرًا.

“Worship Allah by being content, and if you cannot, then know that in the patient endurance of that which is unpleasant lies much good.”

¹ Surah 21 Al Anbiyaa Verse 23.

Certain wealthy people neglect some duties and commit some transgressions and yet feel secure; this has nothing at all to do with contentment, for disobedience and neglect of one's duties are causes of Allah Exalted is He wrath, so how can one be content with that which displeases Allah? Allah, the Exalted says,

إِنْ تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنْكُمْ، وَلَا يَرْضَىٰ لِعِبَادِهِ الْكُفْرَ، وَإِنْ تَشْكُرُوا يَرْضَهُ لَكُمْ.

“If you reject Allah, Truly Allah has no need of you; but He is not pleased with His ingratitude servants: if you are grateful He is pleased with you.”¹

Such wretched people are pleased only with themselves, but think they are pleased with their Lord! Being happy with oneself and being delighted with one's Lord is far apart and never unite in the same place.

How excellent is that which the Imam al-Ghazali, may Allah be pleased with him, wrote to Abu'Fath al-Dimashqi, may Allah have mercy on him, “Contentment is to be content inwardly with Allah's acts, and outwardly to do what pleases Him.” Should a servant wish to know how much contentment he has, then let him search for it when hardships arrive, afflictions descend, and sicknesses become severe, for in these circumstances he will either find it or not.

One frequently hears the villains of today replying when asked about why they abandoned obedience and committed transgressions, “This is something which Allah has predestined us to do; we cannot avoid it and are but subjugated slaves.”

The followers who think as above and believe that man has ‘No Free Will’ [*Mazhab Jabariya*] and those who hold such an opinion are implying, although not explicitly saying, that there was no point in sending Messengers and revealing Books. How can someone who claims to have faith argue in favour of himself and against his Lord when Allah's is the most profound argument against all His creatures? And how can a believer be willing to imitate the polytheists who said,

¹ Surah 39 Al Zumar Verse 7.

لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكْنَا وَلَا آبَاؤُنَا وَلَا حَرَمْنَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ،

“If Allah had wished, we should not have given partners to Him nor would our fathers; nor should we have had any taboos.”¹

Has he not heard Allah’s reply to them through His Prophet,
قُلْ هَلْ عِنْدَكُمْ مِنْ عِلْمٍ فَتُخْرِجُوهُ لَنَا إِنْ تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا تَخْرُصُونَ.

“Have you any certain knowledge? If so, produce it before us. You follow nothing but conjecture: you do nothing but guess.”²

And even the idolaters when they return to Allah will not be able to use such an untenable argument; on the contrary,

قَالُوا رَبَّنَا غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْنَا شِقْوَتُنَا وَكُنَّا قَوْمًا ضَالِّينَ.

“They will say, “Our Lord! Our misfortune overwhelmed us, and we became a people astray!”³

رَبَّنَا أَبْصَرْنَا وَسَمِعْنَا فَارْجِعْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا إِنَّا مُوقِنُونَ.

“Our Lord! We have seen, and we have heard: Now then send us back to the world: we will work righteousness: for we do indeed (now) believe.”⁴

You should know that supplication, even with insistence, does not compromise contentment; on the contrary, it is a part of it. How can it not be so when prayer expresses true faith in Allah’s Oneness, and it is the language of servitude, and the hallmark of the realisation of helplessness, neediness, humility and poverty. Anyone who has realised these attributes has attained to knowledge and arrival, and the utmost nearness to Allah. It has been related that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said,

إِنَّ الدُّعَاءَ مَخَّ الْعِبَادَةِ وَسَلَاخَ الْمُؤْمِنِ وَثَوْرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَإِنْ مَنْ لَا يَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ يُغْضَبُ عَلَيْهِ.

¹ Surah 6 Al Anáam Verse 148.

² Surah 6 Al Anáam Verse 148.

³ Surah 23 Al Mu’minun Verse 106

⁴ Surah 32 Al Sadjad Verse 12.

“That prayer is the heart of divine worship, the weapon of the believer, and the light of the heavens and earth, and that those who do not ask Allah incur His wrath.

Our Lord, Majestic is His power! Says,

وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا.

“The most beautiful names belong to Allah: so, call on him by them.”¹

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمُ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ.

“And Your Lord says, Call on Me, and I will answer your prayer.”²

That which happened to Ibrahim, the Intimate Friend of Allah, peace be on him, who was cast into the fire and refrained from praying, was ‘due to a secret concerning the particular state he was in Allah has related many of his prayers in numerous passages of His Book. Allah has described more about him than from any other Prophet. Thus, study the Book of Allah and extract the sciences from it, for they have all been set within it, whether minute or immense, manifest or hidden. Allah the Exalted says,

مَا فَرَطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ

“We have neglected nothing in the Book.”³

وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تَبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ،

“And We have sent down to you the Book explaining all things,

وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ.

A Guide, a Mercy, and Glad Tidings to Muslims.”⁴

¹ Surah 7 Al Áraaf Verse 180.

² Surah 40 Ghaafir Verse 60.

³ Surah 6 Al An’am Verse 38.

⁴ Surah 16 An Nahl Verse 89.

Conclusion

**In conclusion, we lay down here some religious counsel
From Holy Traditions [*hadith qudsiya*] and sound hadiths.**

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him and his family, repeating the words of his Lord, said,

يَا عِبَادِي إِنِّي حَرَمْتُ الظُّلْمَ عَلَى نَفْسِي وَجَعَلْتُهُ بَيْنَكُمْ مُحَرَّمًا فَلَا تَظَالَمُوا، يَا عِبَادِي كُلُّكُمْ ضَالٌّ إِلَّا مَنْ هَدَيْتُهُ فَاسْتَهْدُونِي أَهْدِيكُمْ، يَا عِبَادِي كُلُّكُمْ جَائِعٌ إِلَّا مَنْ أَطْعَمْتُهُ فَاسْتَطْعِمُونِي أَطْعِمَكُمْ، يَا عِبَادِي كُلُّكُمْ عَارٍ إِلَّا مَنْ كَسَوْتُهُ فَاسْتَكْسُونِي أَكْسُكُمْ، يَا عِبَادِي إِنَّكُمْ تُخْطِئُونَ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَأَنَا أَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا فَاسْتَغْفِرُونِي أَغْفِرْ لَكَ. يَا عِبَادِي إِنَّكُمْ لَنْ تَبْلُغُوا نَفْعِي فَتَنْفَعُونِي وَلَنْ تَبْلُغُوا ضَرِّي فَتَضُرُّونِي، يَا عِبَادِي لَوْ أَنَّ أَوْلَكُمْ وَآخِرَكُمْ وَإِنْسَكُمْ وَجَنَّكُمْ كَانُوا عَلَى أَنْفَى قَلْبِ رَجُلٍ وَاحِدٍ مِنْكُمْ مَا زَادَ ذَلِكَ فِي مُلْكِي شَيْئًا، يَا عِبَادِي لَوْ أَنَّ أَوْلَكُمْ وَآخِرَكُمْ وَإِنْسَكُمْ وَجَنَّكُمْ كَانُوا عَلَى أَفْجَرِ قَلْبِ رَجُلٍ وَاحِدٍ مَا نَقَصَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ مُلْكِي شَيْئًا، يَا عِبَادِي لَوْ أَنَّ أَوْلَكُمْ وَآخِرَكُمْ وَإِنْسَكُمْ وَجَنَّكُمْ قَامُوا فِي صَعِيدٍ وَاحِدٍ فَسَأَلُونِي فَأَعْطَيْتُ كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْكُمْ مَسْأَلَتَهُ مَا نَقَصَ ذَلِكَ مِمَّا عِنْدِي إِلَّا كَمَا يَنْقُصُ الْمَخِيطُ إِذَا أُدْخِلَ الْبَحْرَ، يَا عِبَادِي إِنَّمَا هِيَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ أُحْصِيهَا لَكُمْ ثُمَّ أُوقِيكُمْ إِيَّاهَا فَمَنْ وَجَدَ خَيْرًا فَلْيَحْمَدِ اللَّهَ وَمَنْ وَجَدَ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ فَلَا يَلُومَنَّ إِلَّا نَفْسَهُ.

“O My servants! I have forbidden Myself injustice and made it forbidden between you, so do not be unjust to each other! O My servants! You are all hungry, save those whom I feed; therefore, ask Me, and I shall feed you! O My servants! You are all naked save those whom I clothe; therefore, ask Me and I shall clothe you! O My servants! You do wrong night and day, and I forgive all sins; so, ask Me and I shall forgive you! O My servants! You will never be able to benefit or harm Me. O My servants! Were the first of you and the last, the humans and the jinn, to become equal to the most pious of heart among you, it would add nothing to My kingdom. O My servants! Were the first of you and the last, the humans and the jinn, to become equal to the most depraved of heart among you, it would detract nothing from My kingdom. O My servants! Were the first of you and the last, the humans and the jinn, to stand on one plain and ask Me, and were I to grant each his request, it would diminish that which I possess no more than would a needle when dipped into the sea. O My servants! It is but your deeds which I record for you, then give you full requital; therefore, let him who finds good praise Allah, and him who does not, blame only himself.”

And he, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, and his family said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَوْحَى إِلَيَّ أَنْ تَوَاضَعُوا حَتَّى لَا يَفْخَرَ أَحَدٌ عَلَى أَحَدٍ، وَلَا يَبْغِيَ أَحَدٌ عَلَى أَحَدٍ.
 “Indeed, Allah has revealed to me that you should be humble such that no one is proud of anyone, and no one will be ‘want’ over another.”

And he, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him and his family, said, “I once saw my Lord in a dream,” and related the hadith until he said,

يَا مُحَمَّدُ! قُلْتُ: لَبَيْكَ، قَالَ إِذَا صَلَّيْتَ فَقُلْ: اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ فِعْلَ الْخَيْرَاتِ، وَتَرْكَ الْمُنْكَرَاتِ، وَحُبَّ الْمَسَاكِينِ، وَإِذَا أَرَدْتَ بِعِبَادِكَ فِتْنَةً فَأَقْبِضْنِي إِلَيْكَ غَيْرَ مَفْتُونٍ.

“O Muhammad!” I said, “At your service!” He said, “When you pray, declare, “O our Lord! I ask You to grant me acts of goodness, the renunciation of foul deeds, and love for the poor; and that if You intend to tempt Your servants that You bring me to You not tempted.”

And he, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him and his family, said,

قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: ابْنُ آدَمَ قُمْ إِلَيَّ أَمْشِ إِلَيْكَ، وَأَمْشِ إِلَيَّ أَهْرُولُ إِلَيْكَ، ابْنُ آدَمَ أَذْكُرْنِي سَاعَةً مِنْ أَوَّلِ النَّهَارِ وَسَاعَةً مِنْ آخِرِهِ أَكْفِكَ مَا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ، ابْنُ آدَمَ لَا تَعْجِزْ أَنْ تُصَلِّيَ لِي أَرْبَعَ رَكَعَاتٍ مِنْ أَوَّلِ النَّهَارِ أَكْفِكَ آخِرَهُ.

And Allah the Exalted has said, "O son of Adam! Get up for Me, and I shall walk to you; walk to Me, and I shall run to you. O son of Adam! Remember Me for a while at the day's beginning and a while at its end, and I shall suffice you for whatever lies in-between. O son of Adam! Do not fail to pray four prostrations [*raka'ats*] at the beginning of the day; I shall suffice you thereby for its end."

Allah revealed to Adam, upon whom be peace, "Four things contain all that is good for you and your offspring. One of these is for Me, one for you, one between you and Me, and one between you and My servants. As for the one that is Mine, it is that you worship Me and associate none with Me. As for the one that is yours, this is your deeds, for which I reward you. As for the one that is between you and Me, it is that your place is to pray and Mine to answer. And as for the one that is between you and My servants, it is that you treat them as you would like them to treat you."

It is written in the scrolls of Abraham, upon whom be peace, "The intelligent man should hold his tongue, know his times, and attend to his business. For his intellect, he should devote four hours, one hour to commune with his Lord, another to call himself to account, another to see his brothers who help and assist him, and one hour when he releases his soul to its lawful pleasures."

In the Torah, it is written, "O son of Adam! Do not fail to stand before Me in prayer, for I am Allah and have drawn near to your heart, and in the Unseen did you behold My Light."

And in another of Allah's revealed Books it was written, "O son of Adam! I have created you to worship Me, so do not play games, and guaranteed your sustenance, so do not tire yourself. O son of Adam! Seek Me, and you shall find Me, and when you find Me you

will have seen everything, but if you miss Me, you will have missed all things, for I am dearer to you than all else. O son of Adam! I am Allah Who says to something, “Be!” and it will be! Obey Me, and I shall grant you to will to something, “Be!” and it will be.”

And Allah revealed to Moses, upon whom be peace, “O son of ‘Imran! Be alert, take some brothers for yourself, for any intimate friend or companion who does not help you to please Me is your enemy. O Moses! What have you to do with the abode of the unjust? It is no abode for you! Drive its anxieties from yourself, and divide yourself from it with your heart, for an evil place it is, save for those who do good, for whom it is a place of excellence. O Moses! I shall watch the wrongdoer until I give to those he wronged their rights from him. O Moses! When you see affluence approaching say, “A sin the punishment of which has been hastened!” and when you see poverty approaching say, “Welcome to the emblem of the virtuous!” O Moses! Do not forget My remembrance, for with forgetfulness do sins increase. And do not amass wealth, for to do so hardens the heart. O Moses! Tell the wrongdoers not to remember Me, for if they remember Me, I shall remember them with a curse, for I have imposed upon Myself that I shall remember those who remember Me.”

Allah revealed to one of His Prophets, upon all of whom be peace, “Tell your people not to do as My enemies do, not to engage in what My enemies engage in, and not to eat of the food of My enemies, so that they do not become My enemies just as the others are My enemies.”

And Allah revealed to David, upon whom be peace, “Find intimacy with Me and be estranged from all else. O David! Tell the True Saints among My servants to rejoice in Me and delight in My remembrance. O David! Cause My servants to love Me!” And he asked, “O Lord! How may I cause them to love You?” And He replied, “Remind them of My favours. O David! The one who returns a runaway to Me I declare an arduous worker for My sake. O David! When you see a man who seeks Me then be a servant to him. O David! Do not inquire about Me from a scholar whom the world has intoxicated, for he will bar you from My Path; such are to My servants

like highwaymen. O David! Behave as do the righteous, smile at the depraved, be altogether sincere with My friends, and opposed to My enemies. O David! Be as a compassionate father to widows and orphans, and I shall increase your provision and remit your sins. O David! Lower your eyes and hold your tongue, for I do not like the corrupt and plea abundantly for forgiveness for yourself and all sinners.”

Allah revealed to one of His Prophets, upon all of whom be peace, “Remember Me when you are angry, and I shall remember you when I give, and thus not annihilate you along with those I annihilate.”

And Allah revealed to Jesus, may blessings and peace be upon him, “Tell the Children of Israel not to enter any of My houses save with pure hearts, humble eyes, and Allah-fearing hands. Let them know that I shall not answer any of their prayers while they still owe any creature reparation for an injustice.” It was also revealed to him, “O son of Mary! Counsel yourself; and then if you take heed, counsel the people; if not then be ashamed before Me.”

It has been related that Allah the Exalted has said, “Tell those who study for other than a religious purpose, and learn but not to practice, who put on the garments of intelligence to impress others, whose language is sweeter than honey and whose hearts are more bitter than aloes (a bitter plant). Is it regarding Me that they are deceived? Is it Me that they defy? I swear that I shall send against them a trial that will leave the intelligent among them dazed.”

Allah revealed to Moses, upon whom be peace, “When you see the poor call them to account just as you call the wealthy. If you do not, then bury everything that I have taught you under the dust.”

And Allah revealed to David, upon whom be peace, “O David! Tell My friends and beloved ones to forsake their companions, for I shall comfort them with My remembrance speak to them intimately, and remove the veil between Myself and them, that they may behold My Glory. Speak of Me, O David, to the people of the earth, and tell them that I am the lover of the one who loves Me. The companion of the one who sits with Me. The comfort of the one who seeks comfort

in Me. The friend of the one who befriends Me. I obey the one who obeys Me and (Allah) choose the one who chooses Me. So, come to be honoured by Me; keep My company and deal with Me, for I am Allah, the Liberal, the Glorious. I say to a thing, “Be!” and it is.”

And Allah revealed to one of His Prophets, upon all of whom be peace, “Servant of Mine! Give Me the tears of your eyes and the reverence of your heart, then call Me and I shall respond to you, for I am the Near, the Responsive. Servant of Mine! Go forth to the cities and the fortresses and tell them two things on My behalf: tell them to eat nothing but good halal food, and to say nothing but the truth. And if one of them wishes to engage in an activity let him think of its consequences; if these are good, then let him proceed, while if they are bad, then let him refrain.”

And Allah revealed to Jesus, upon whom be peace, “Tell the Children of Israel to heed these two things from Me: tell them to be content with, but little of this world for the good of their religion, even as the people of the world are content with but little of religion for the good of their world.”

Allah revealed to Moses, upon whom be peace, “Be as a lone bird which eats from the treetops, drinks plain water, and when night falls seeks refuge in a cave, seeking intimacy with Me, feeling estranged from those who disobey Me. O Moses! I have imposed it upon Myself that I shall not allow the works of those who draw away from Me to be completed. I shall disappoint those whose hopes are in other than Me, and I shall break the backs of those who seek support from other than Me, and I shall cause to be estranged those who love other than Me. O Moses! I have servants to whom I listen when they speak to Me. To whom I come when they call Me. Whom I bring closer when they approach Me, whom I protect when they draw nearer, whose side I take when they take My side, to whom I am sincere when they are sincere with Me, whom I reward when they act, whose affairs I manage, and whose hearts and states I govern. I gave their hearts to find tranquillity only in My remembrance; which is the cure of their sicknesses, and the light of their hearts. They find solace only in Me,

they allow their hearts to rest with Me alone, and only settled when going towards Me.”

And Allah revealed to David, upon whom be peace, “O David! Give good tidings to the sinners and warn the True Saints!” He asked, “O Lord! How shall I give tidings to the sinners and warn the True Saints?” He said, “Give the glad tidings to the sinners that no sin is too great for Me to forgive and warn the True Saints not to admire their works, for were I to impose My justice and judgement on anyone he would surely be doomed. O David! I have prescribed mercy upon Myself, and decreed forgiveness for those who ask for it; I forgive all sins, small and significant, which can be neither too abundant nor too great for Me; therefore, do not doom yourself, or despair of My mercy, for My mercy has outstripped My wrath. The treasures of the heavens and the earth are in My Hand, as is all goodness; I have created nothing out of a need for it, but only that My power might become known, and that all beholders might know the wisdom of My design and creation. O David, hear Me! Verily I say, “When My servant who is ashamed of his sins, comes to meet Me, I cause his guardian angels to forget them and not ask him about them. O David, hear Me! Verily I say, “Were one of My servants persistently to commit enough sins to fill the world, and then regret this, and ask for My forgiveness just once, and I knew that in his heart he intended never to repeat them, I would cast them off him more swiftly than a bird falls from the sky to the ground.” And David said, “O my Allah, praise belongs to You on this account! None who knows You should lose hope in You.”

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَتَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ اَجْرًا عَظِيْمًا وَاَهْدِنَا صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيْمًا، وَاَجْعَلْنَا مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّْنَ وَالصّٰدِقِيْنَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصّٰلِحِيْنَ وَحَسُنْ اَوْلِيَّكَ رَفِيْعًا. ذٰلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنْ اللّٰهِ وَكَفَى بِاللّٰهِ عَلِيْمًا. وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ اَوَّلًا وَاٰخِرًا وَبَاطِنًا وَظَاهِرًا، هُوَ الْاَوَّلُ وَالْاٰخِرُ وَالظّٰهَرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ، مَا شَاءَ اللّٰهُ لَا قُوَّةَ اِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيْمِ، الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهٰذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْلَا اَنْ هَدَانَا اللّٰهُ.

“O our Allah! Give us from Your Presence a great reward, lead us along a straight path, let us be with those on whom You have bestowed Your favours, “amongst the prophets who teach, the sincere lovers of

Truth, the witnesses who testify, and the Righteous who do good!”¹ Such is the bounty from Allah: And sufficient is it that Allah knows all.² All praises and thanks belong to Allah firstly and lastly, inwardly and outwardly; “He is the First and the Last, the Outward and the Inward, and He has full knowledge of all things.”³ It is Allah’s will. No strength is there, but by God, the High, the Formidable. “Praise and thanks belong to Allah Who led us to this. We would never have been guided had He not guided us.”⁴

The author said,

قُدِّسَ اللهُ سِرَّهُ وَنُورُ ضَرْحِهِ،

“May Allah sanctified his secret and the light of his Kingdom

وَنَفَعَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ بِهِ.

And may the Muslims benefit from it.

This complete the end of the treatise and it was concluded in the year 1069 of the Emigration of the Prophet, who is our Lord, master, and means to our Lord, Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, may the best of blessings and peace be upon him and his family as long as nights and days remain.

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ.

And all praised be Allah, Lord of the Worlds.

¹ Surah 4 An Nisaa Verse 69 - 70.

² Surah 4 An Nisaa Verse 70.

³ Surah 57 Al Hadid Verse 3

⁴ Surah 7 Al Araaf Verse 43.

Notes